AFTERNOON KCDX
アフタヌーン
KCDX
1583
Igarashi Daisuke Collection of Works
Spirits Flying
In The Sky
DAISUKE IGARASHI
Igarashi Daisuke
Spirits Flying In The Sky
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講談社
Birthgrounds
Spirits Flying In The Sky
The Tears of Tarou
Killer of Bears, Stealer of Gods
Covered in Sand
Le Pain et Le Chat
Still Water

アフタヌーン
KCDX
1583

そらトびタマシイ

五十嵐大介

講談社

そらトびタマシイ

五十嵐大介（イガラシダイスケ）

産土

そらトびタマシイ

熊殺し 山盗み太郎の涙

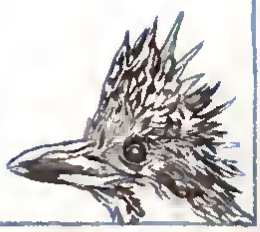
すなかけ

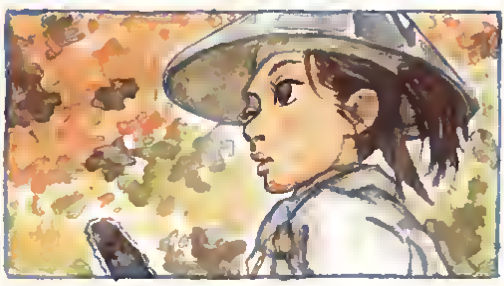
Le Pain et le chat

未だ冬

AFTERNOON KCDX

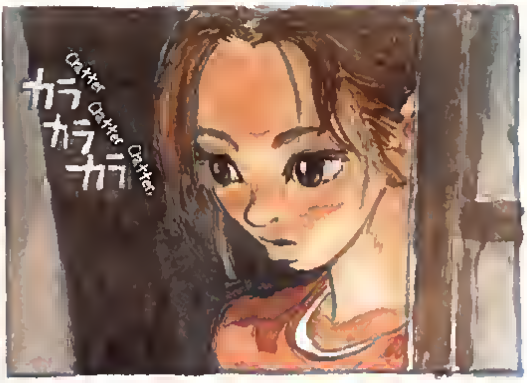
Birthgrounds

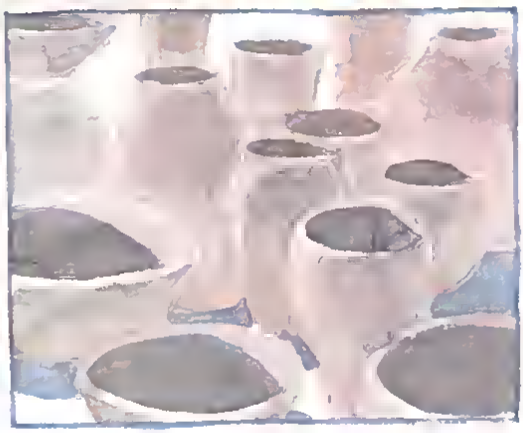




I'm borrowing them.
Hey, gimme your wood, water, and earth.
I brought my work for the day to an end and quickly stole away home.

Eventually, after two months' time had passed...
I'm returning these.
Hey you.
KWEUCK





and soon a great number of kilns were opened.

It became known that the earth from this [illegible] was suited for pottery.

End

Birthground

Originally published in Morning 1998 Issue 2-3

Igarashi Daisuke Collection of Works

Spirits Flying In The Sky

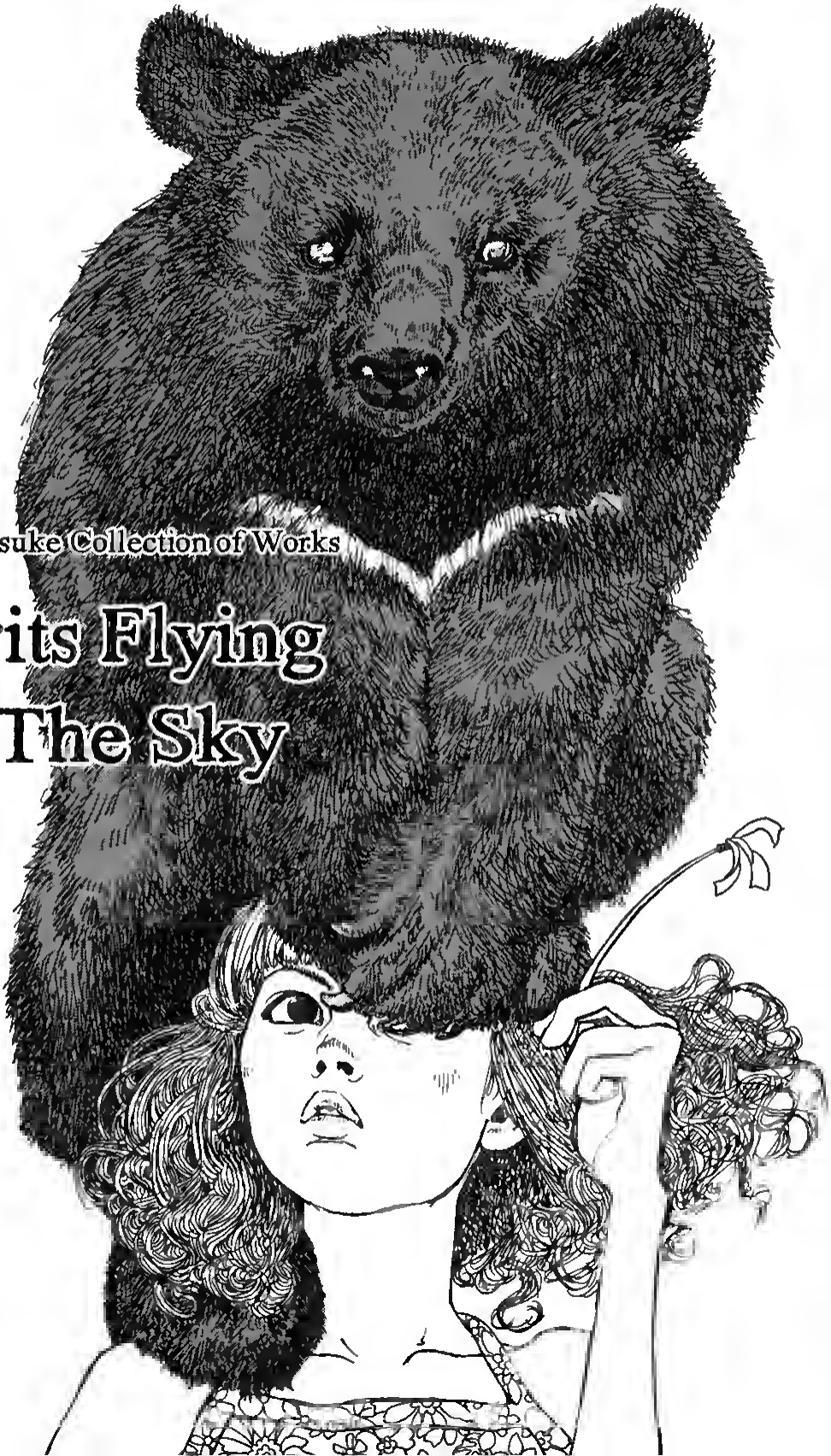


Table Of Contents

Spirits Flying in The Sky 7

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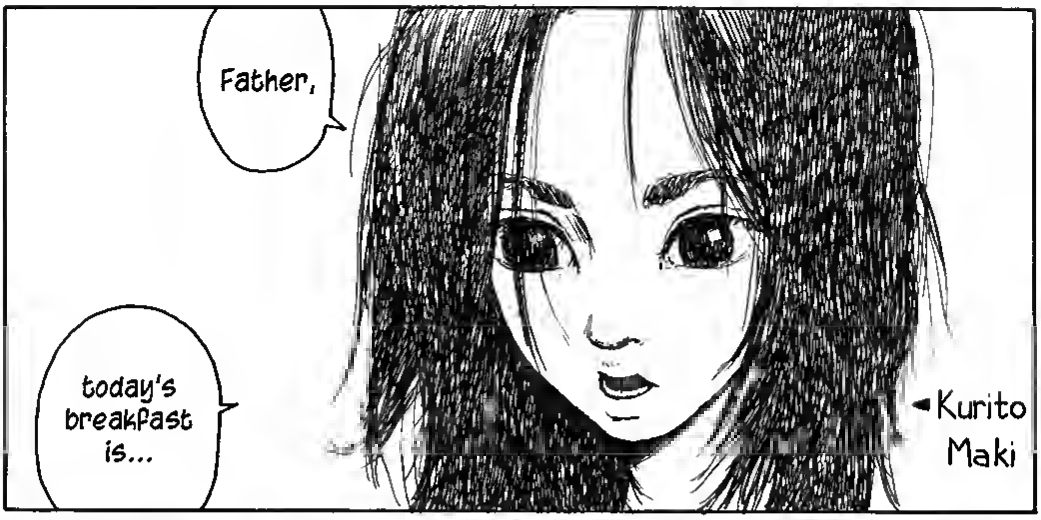
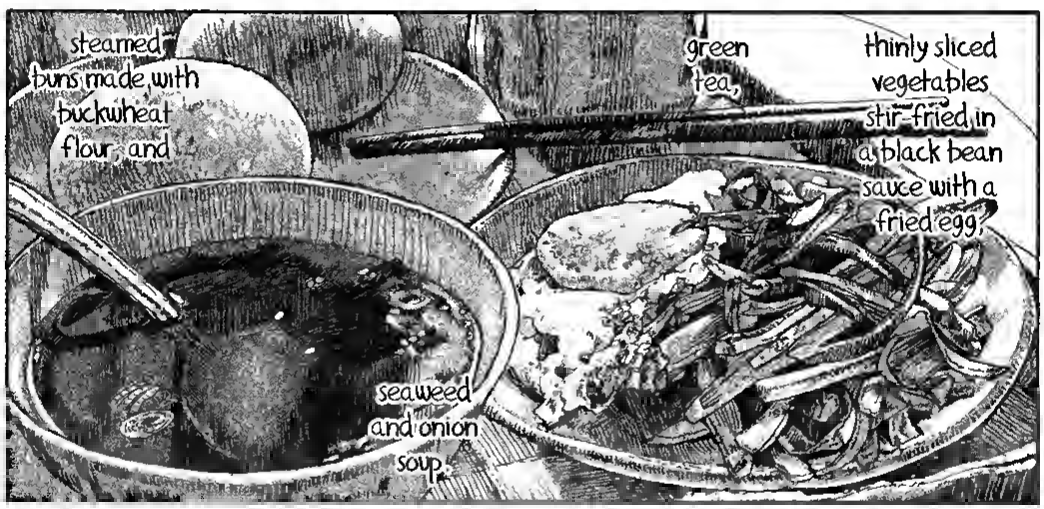
gradually cooled and stiffened.

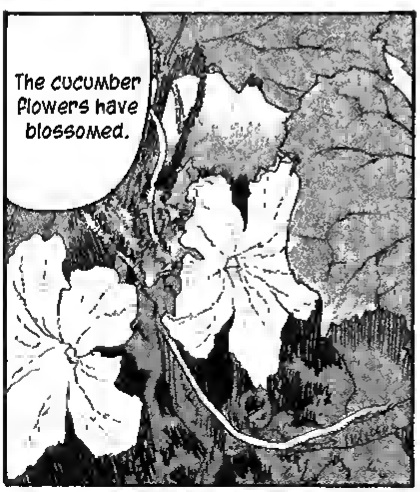
What still remained of the warmth radiating from the chick

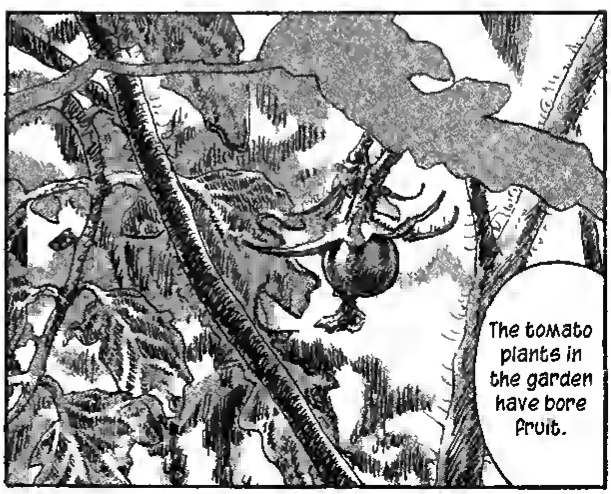
I was seized by the thought that it was just as if I were absorbing its life through the palms of my hands.

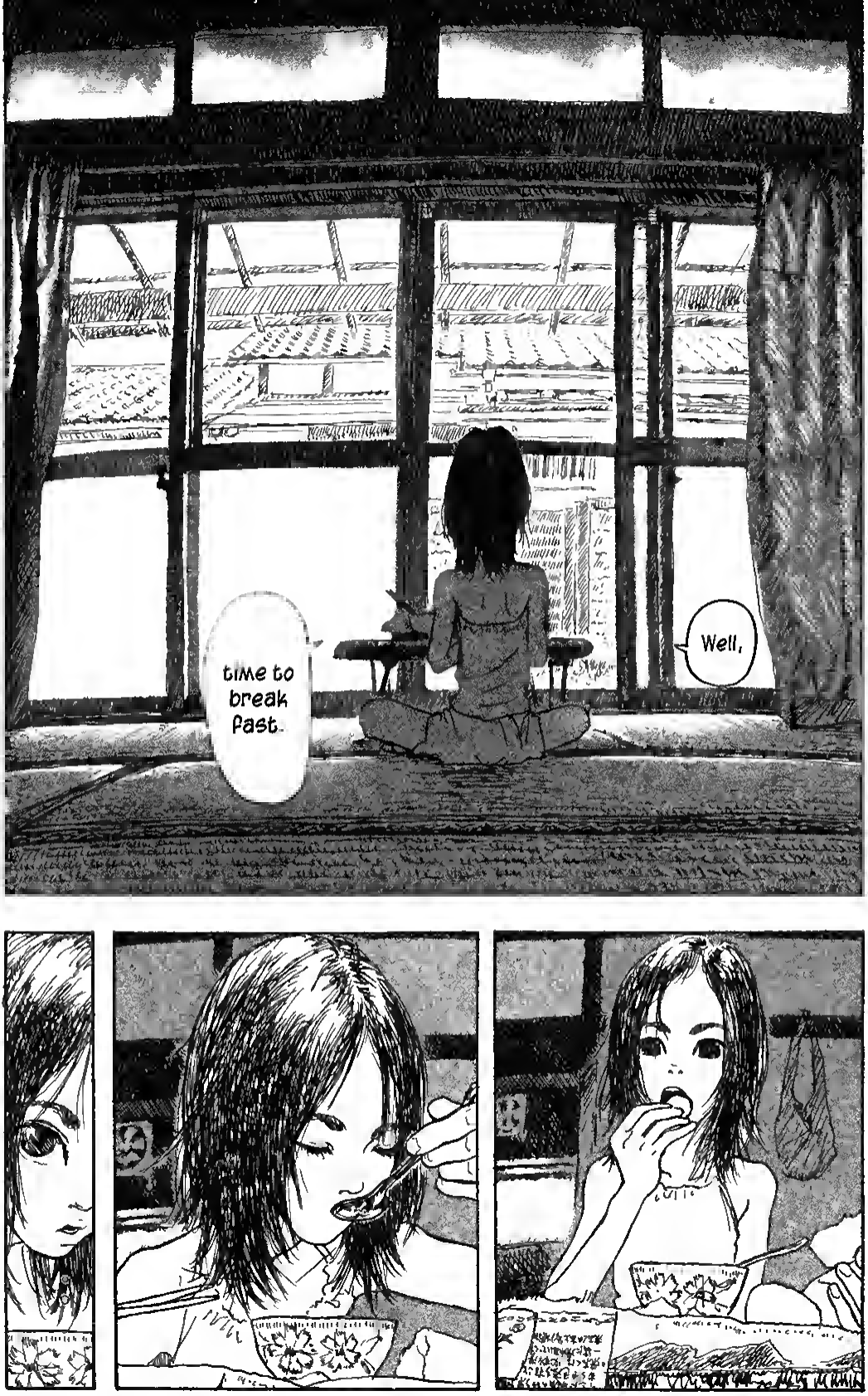
Spirits Flying
In The Sky

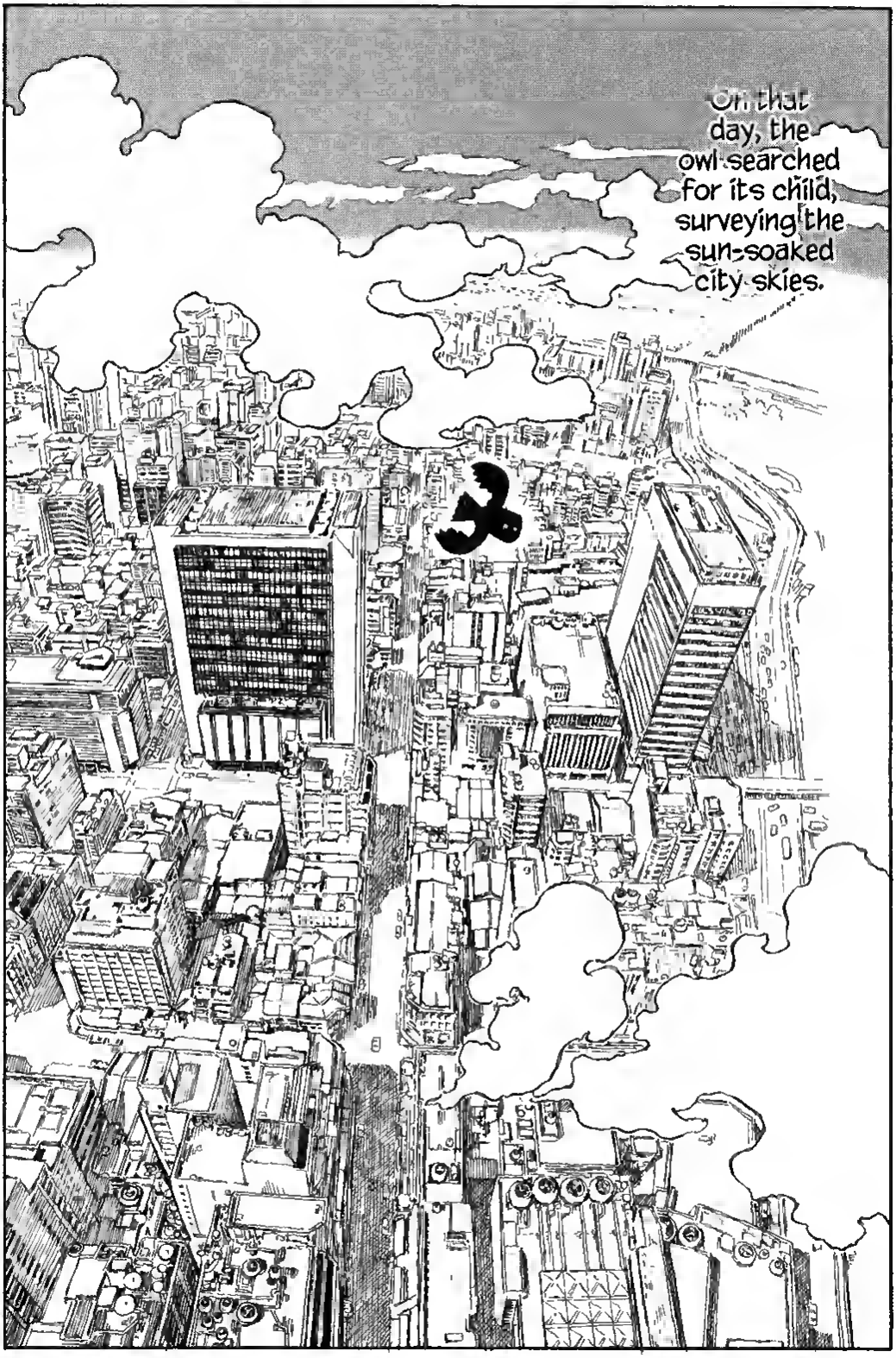

Father,
today's breakfast is...
Kurito Maki

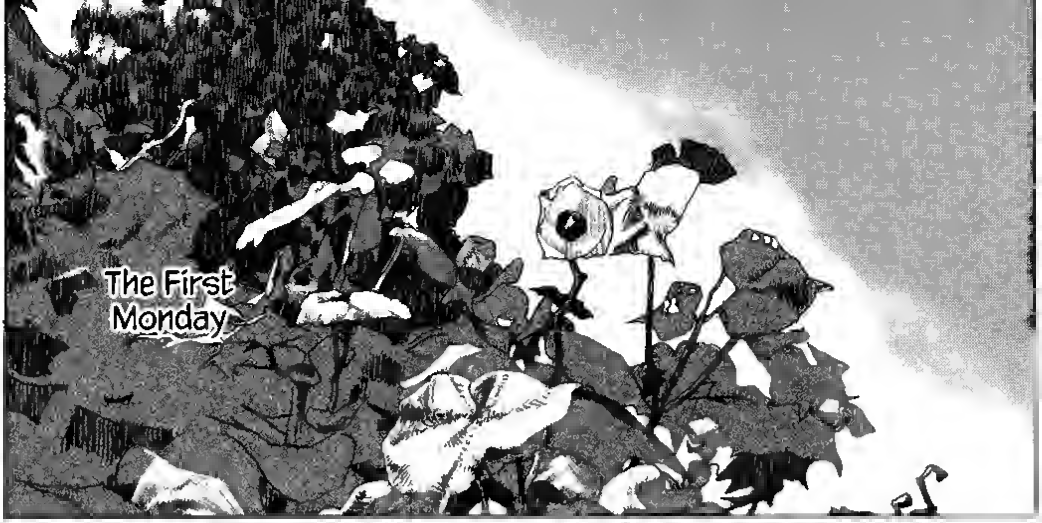

steamed buns made with buckwheat flour, and
green tea,
thinly sliced vegetables stir-fried in a black bean sauce with a fried egg,
seaweed and onion soup.

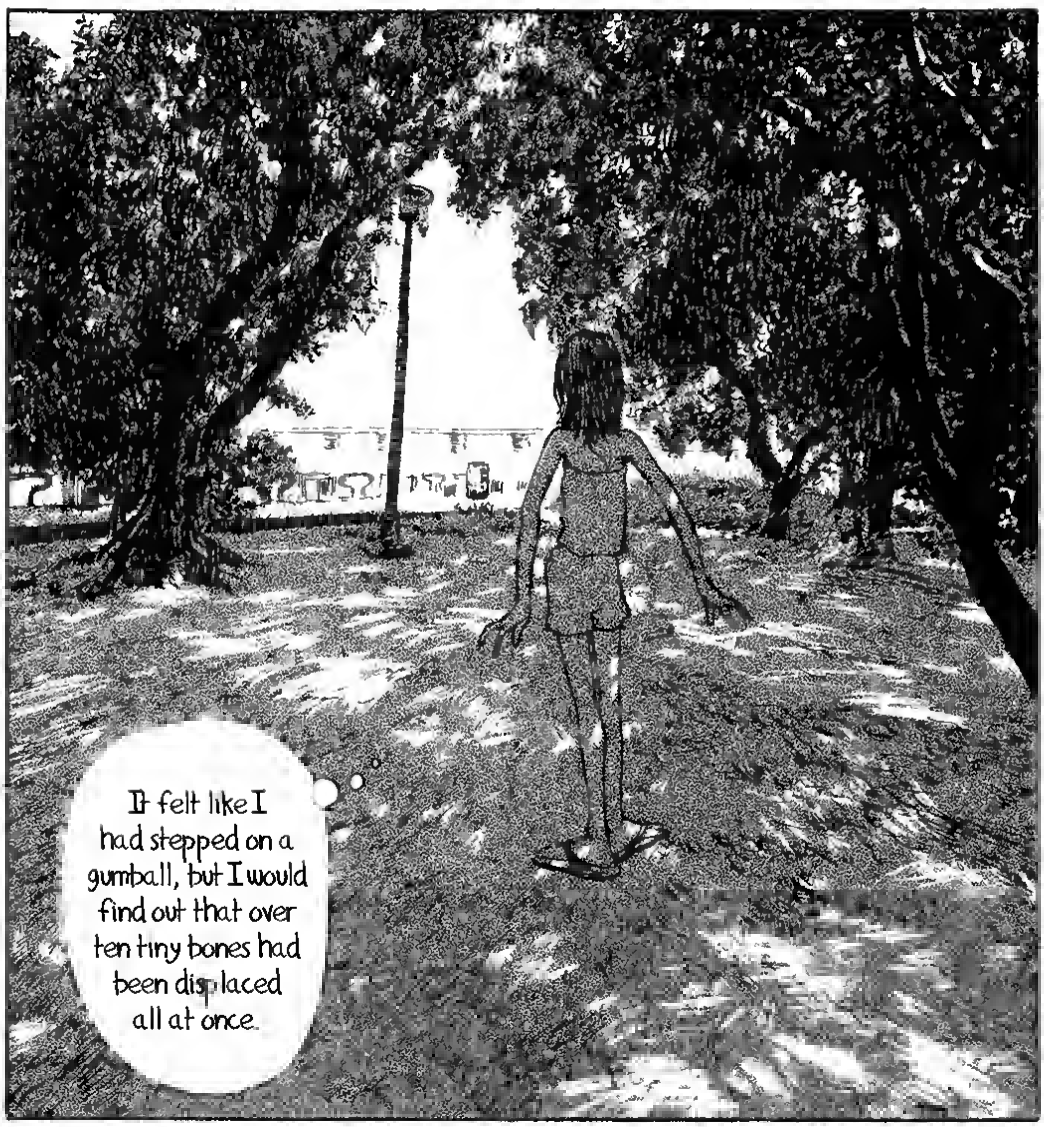

The cucumber flowers have blossomed.


The tomato plants in the garden have bore fruit.

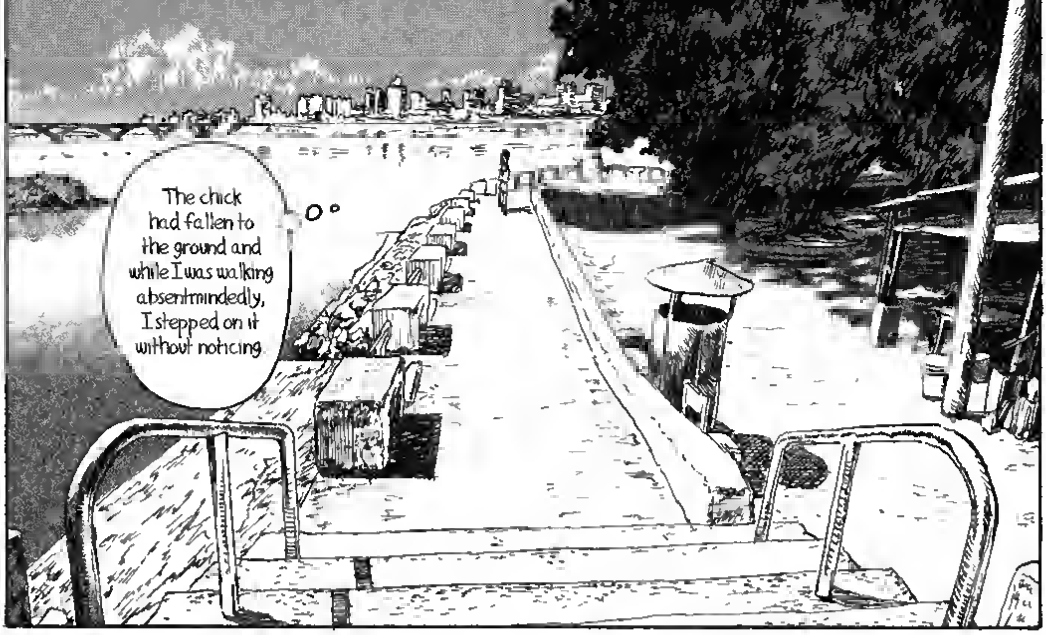

time to break fast.
Well,

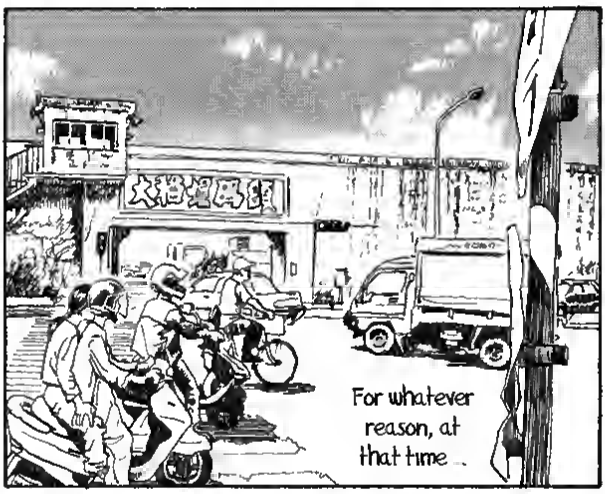

On that day, the owl searched for its child, surveying the sun-soaked city skies.


The First Monday

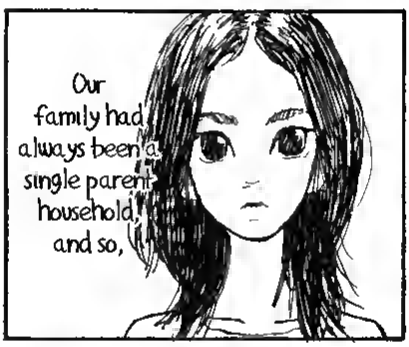

It felt like I had stepped on a gumball, but I would find out that over ten tiny bones had been displaced all at once.

Chirp
I crushed the owl chick under my foot.

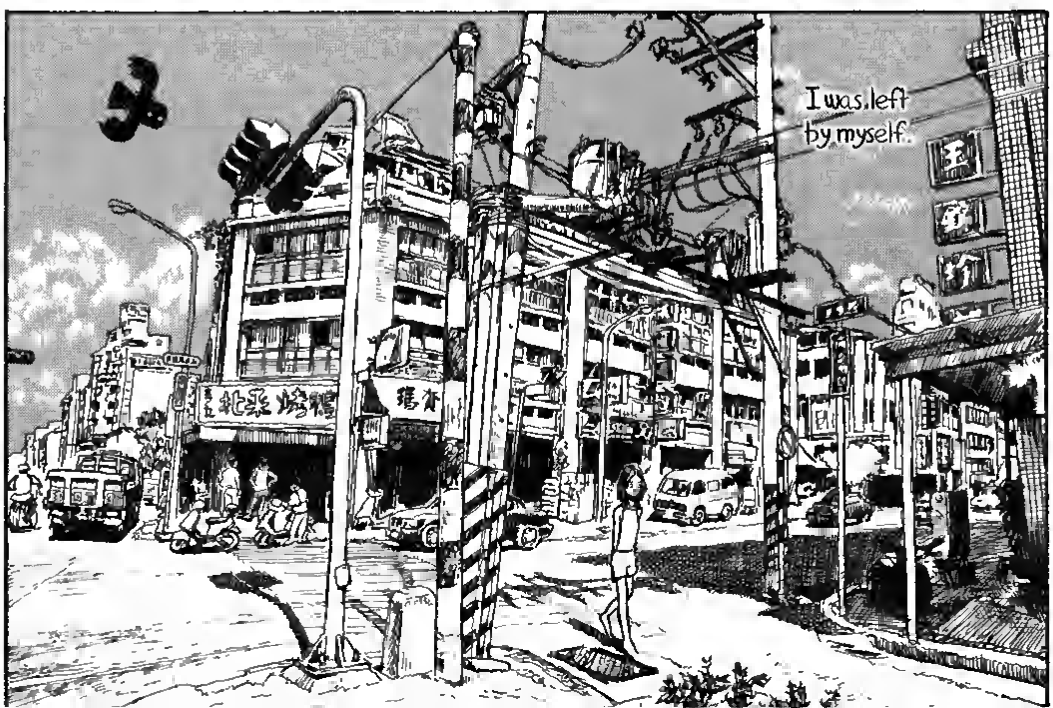

The chick had fallen to the ground and while I was walking absentmindedly, I stepped on it without noticing.

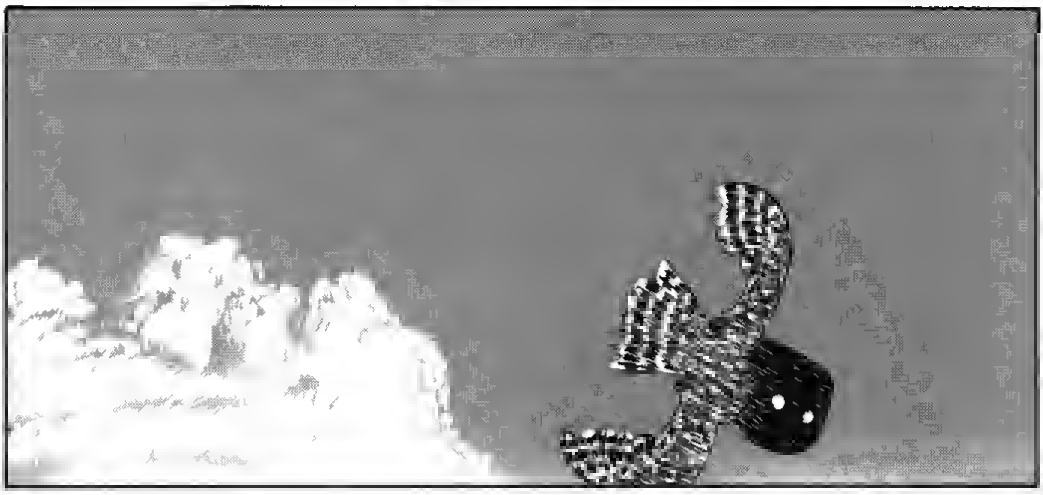

For whatever reason, at that time ...

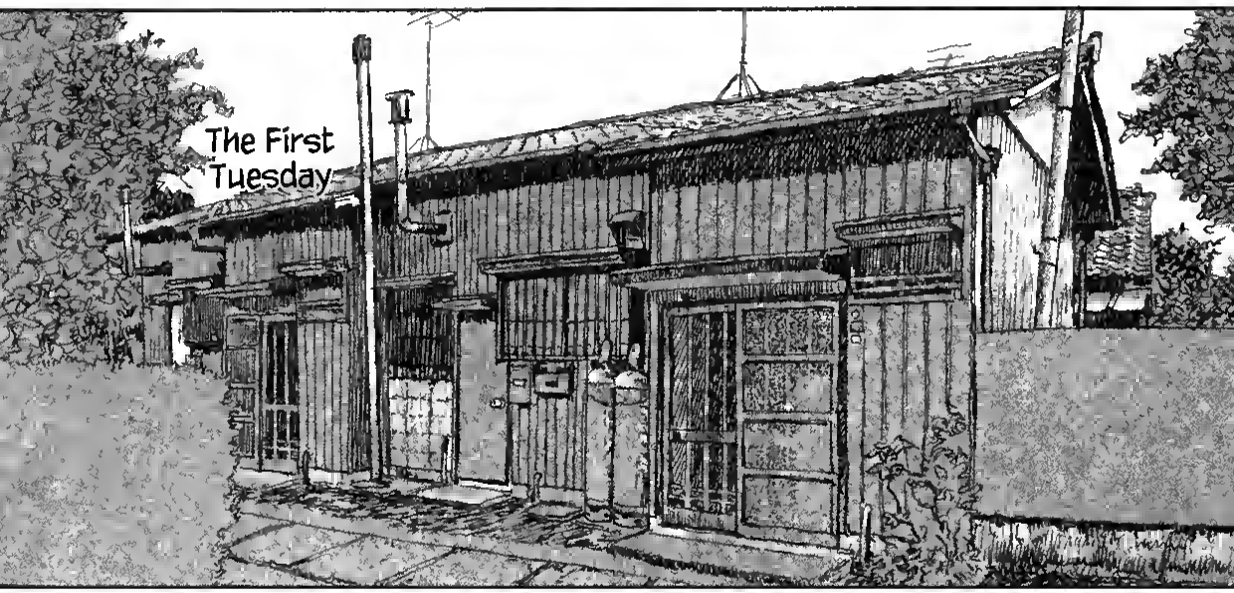
I'll bury this chick with my father.
That was the thought that crossed my mind

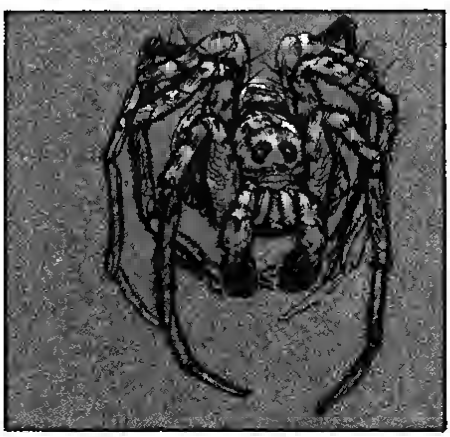

Our family had always been a single parent household, and so,

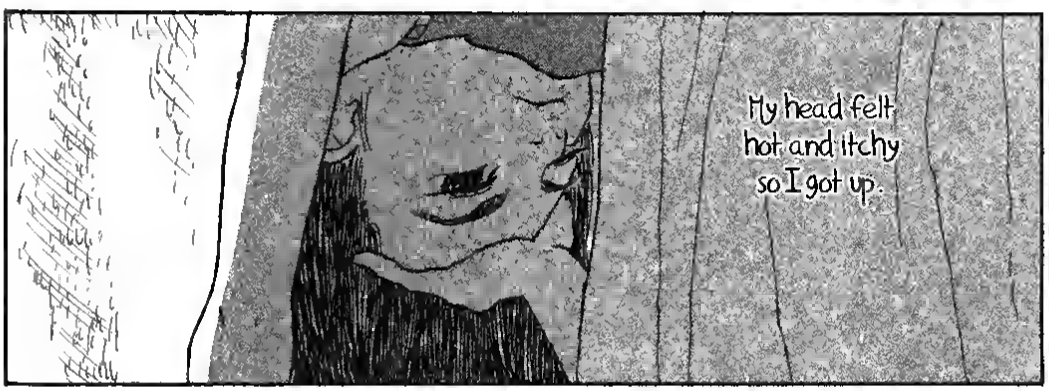
My father died two months ago.


I was left by myself.

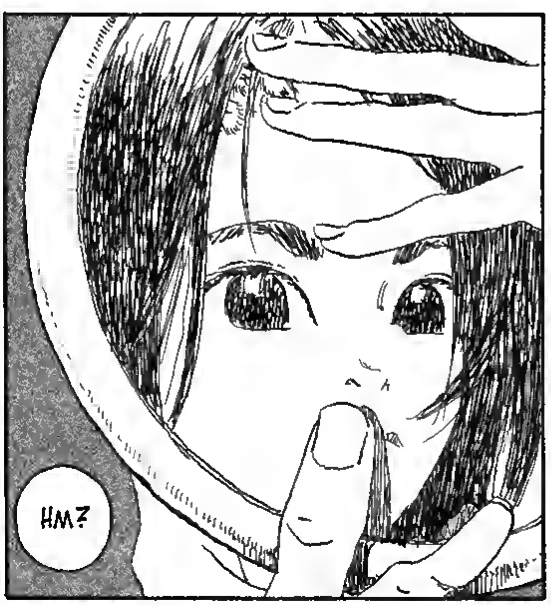


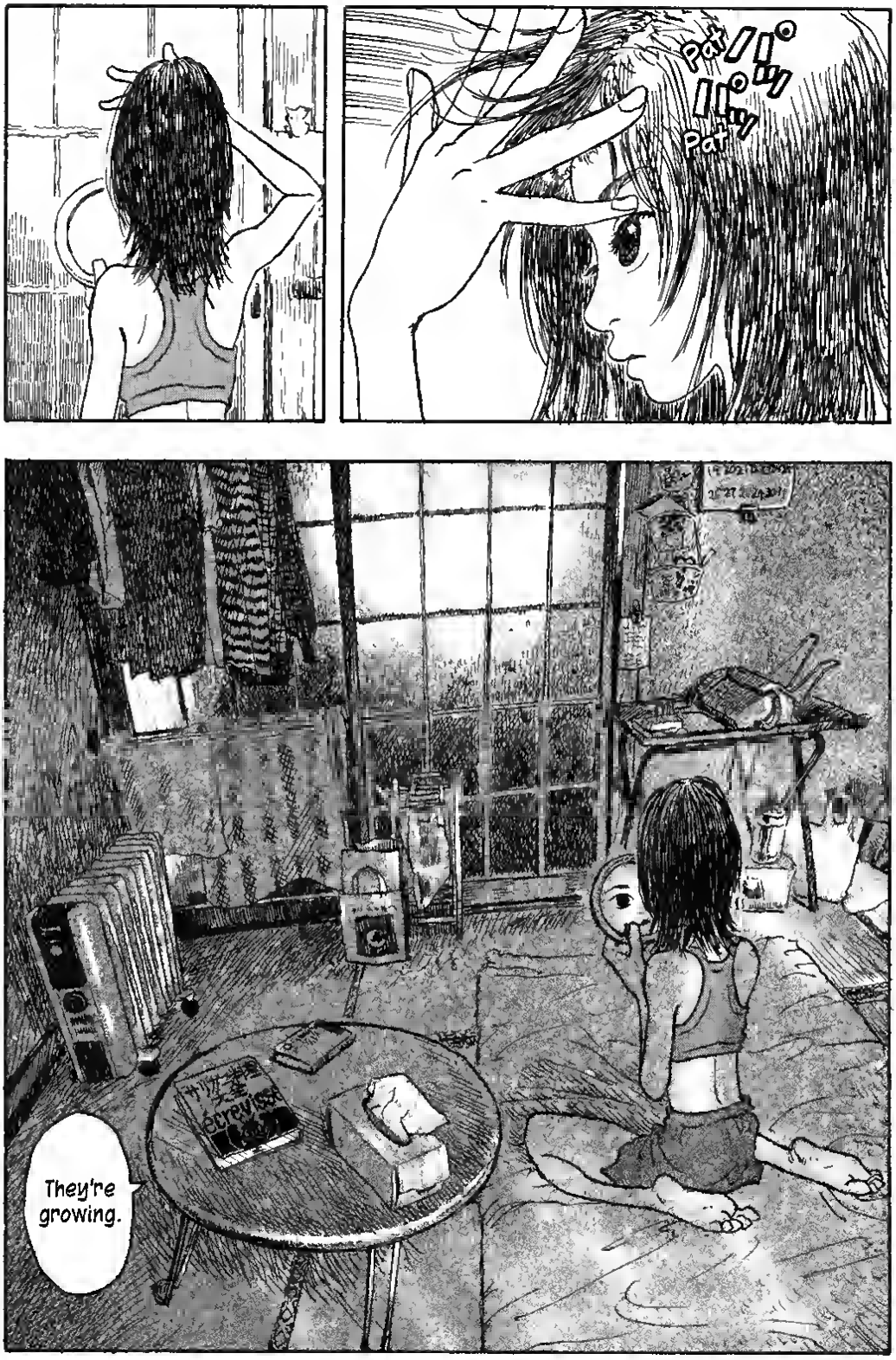

The First
Tuesday

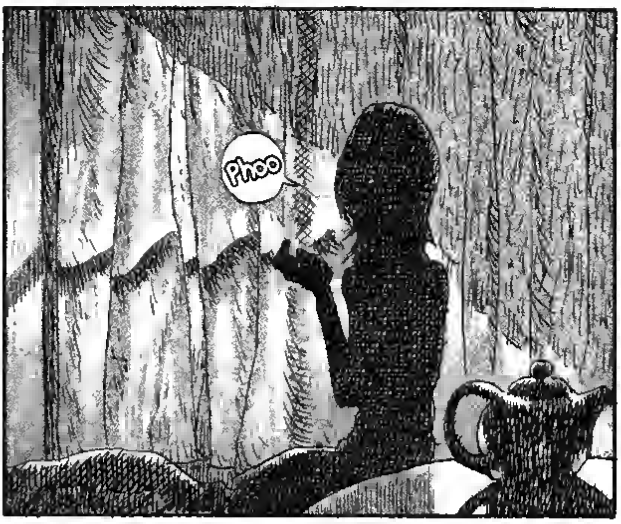



My head felt hot and itchy so I got up.

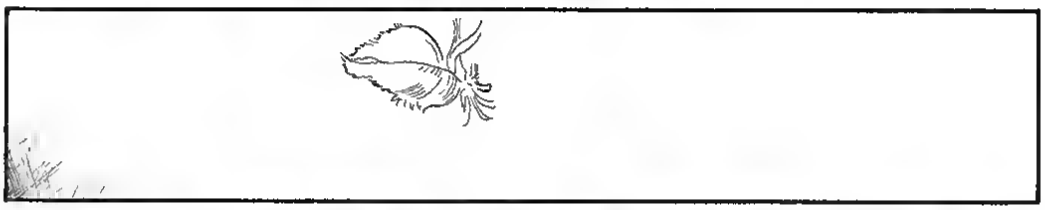
There are feathers in my hairline.

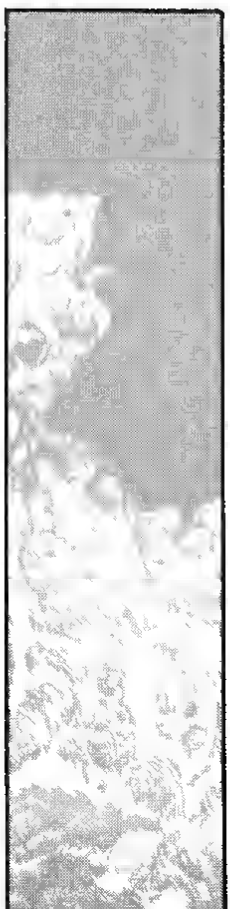

HM?


Pat
Pat
They're growing.


Phoo

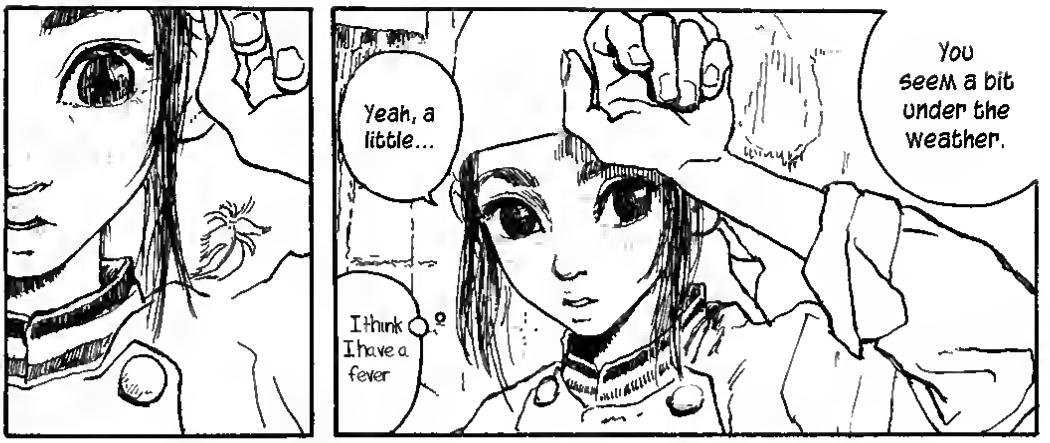
Pluck
OW.

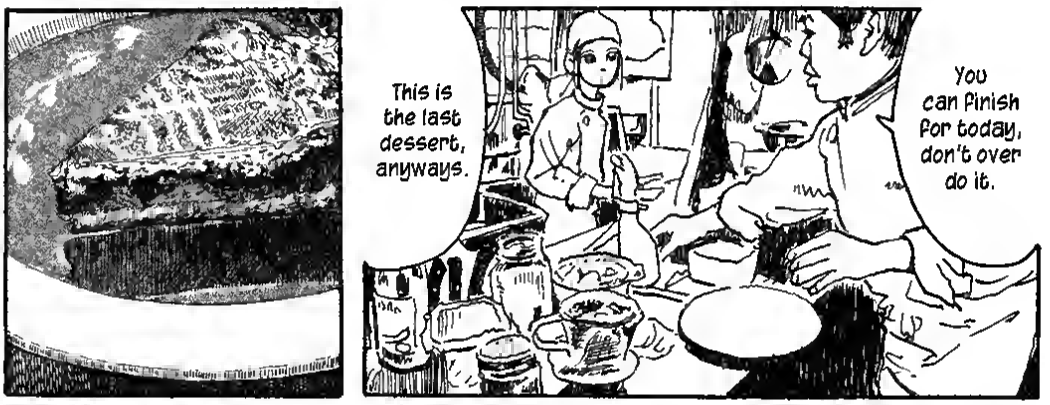


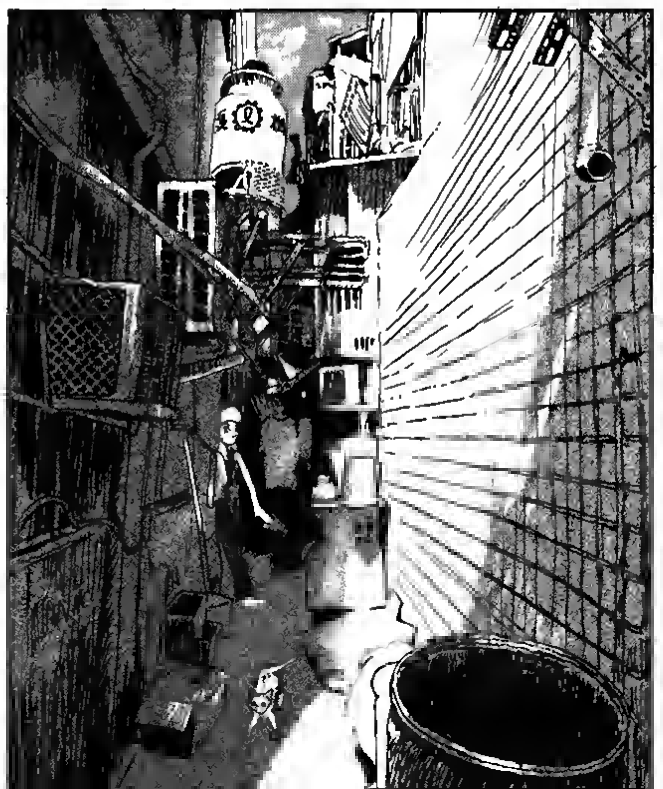


No time for this. I need to get to work.

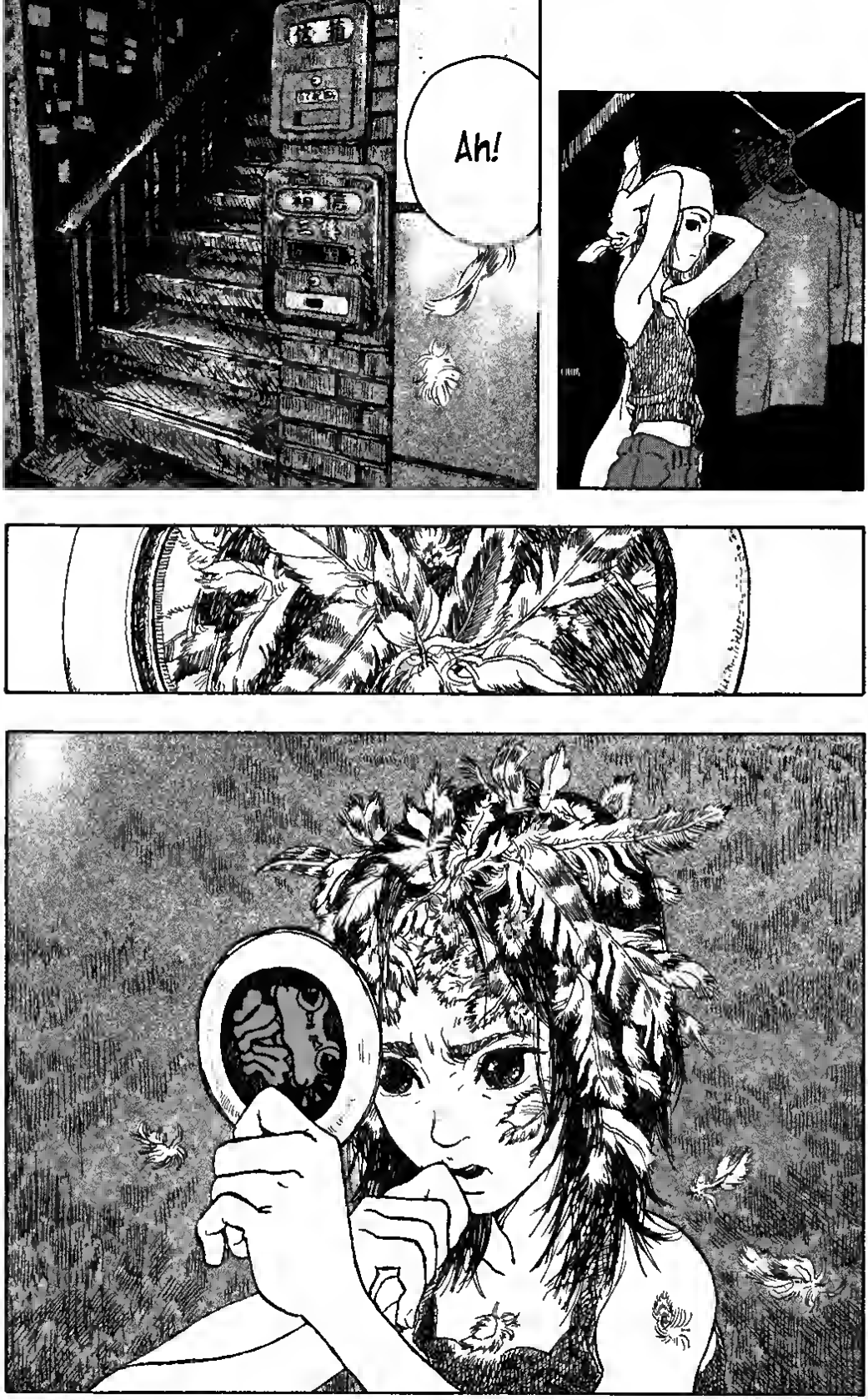
CAFE & RESTAURANT
Cafe & Cake Restaurant
請勿停車
Thank youuuu.
Ah, can you ring up the register?
Okaaay.
On it.
Take care of that table, please.
Got it.
Open that up for me, will you?

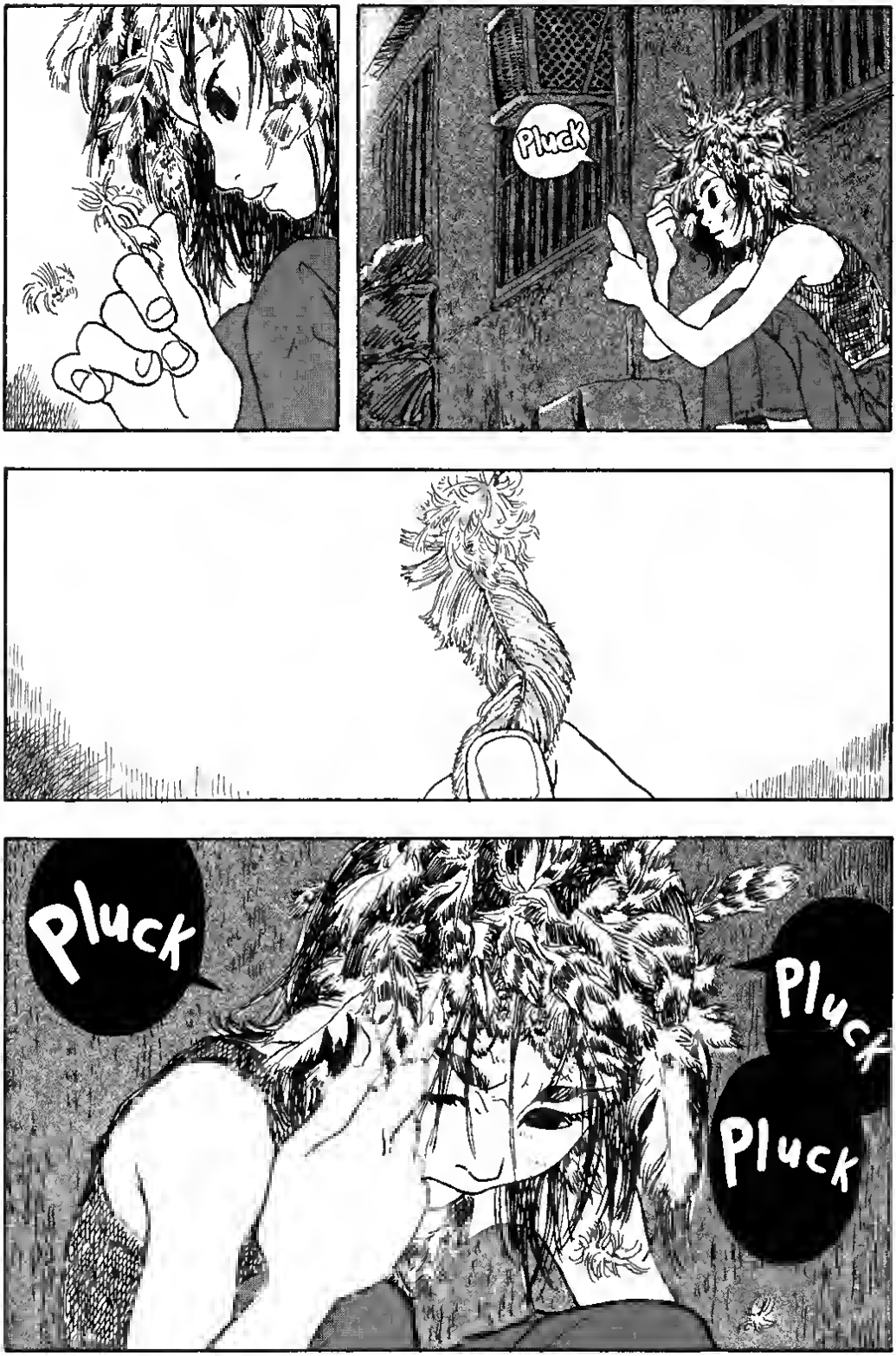

You seem a bit under the weather.
Yeah, a little...
I think I have a fever

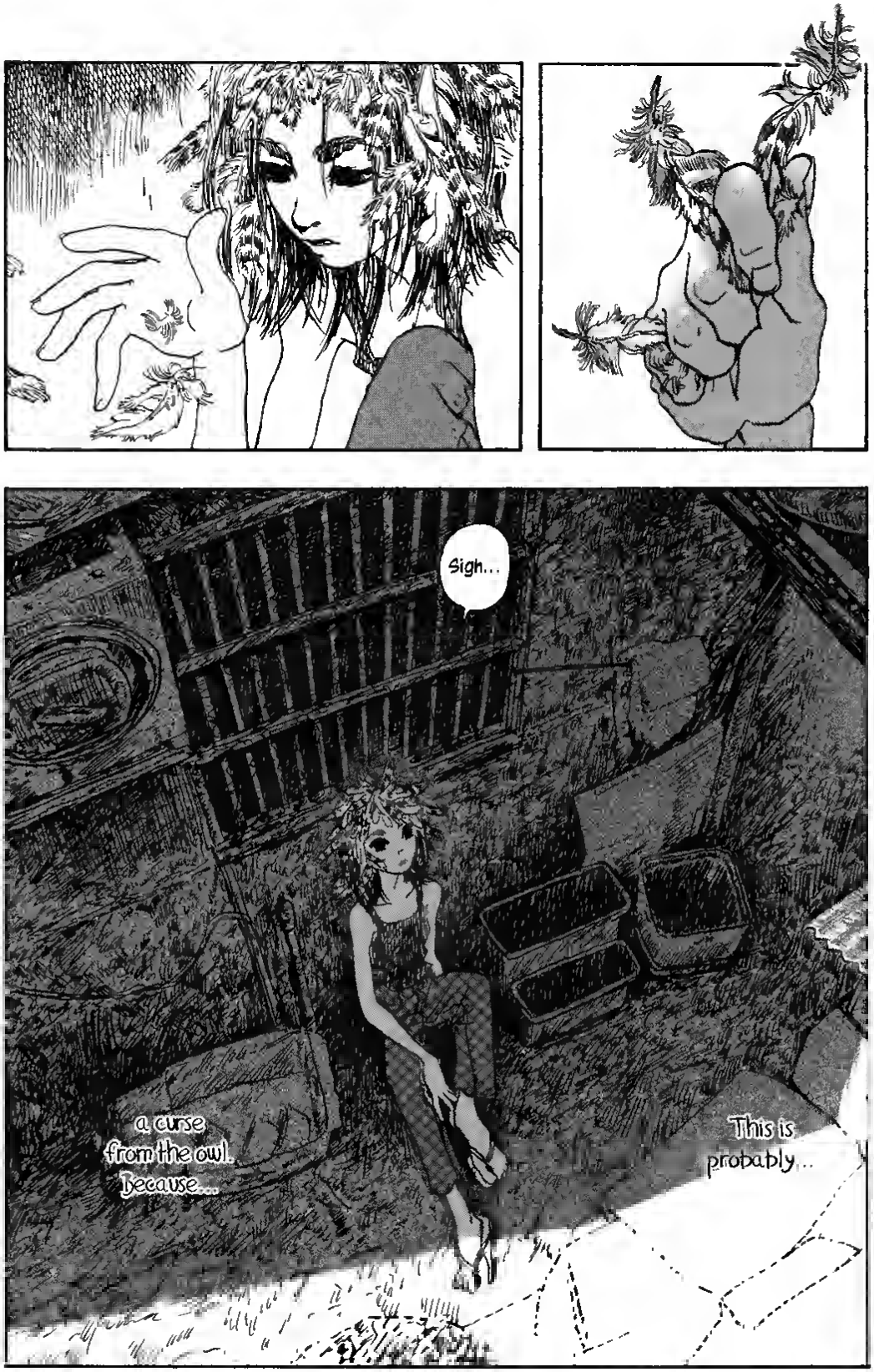

This is the last dessert, anyways.
You can finish for today, don't over do it.

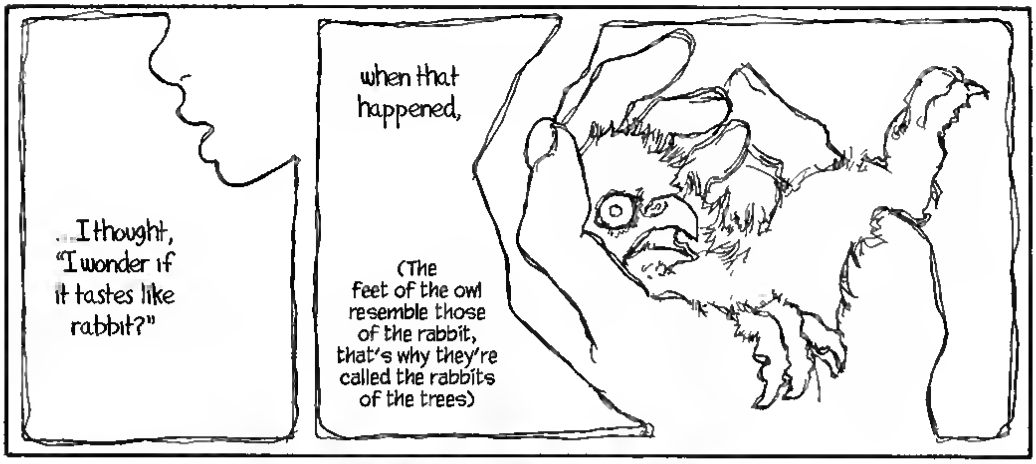


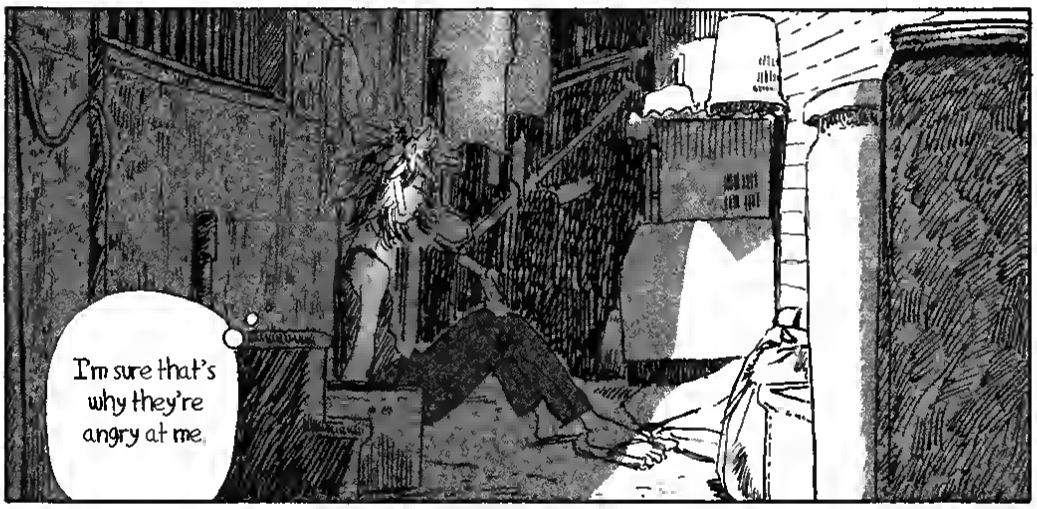
カラカラ sizzle...
sizzle

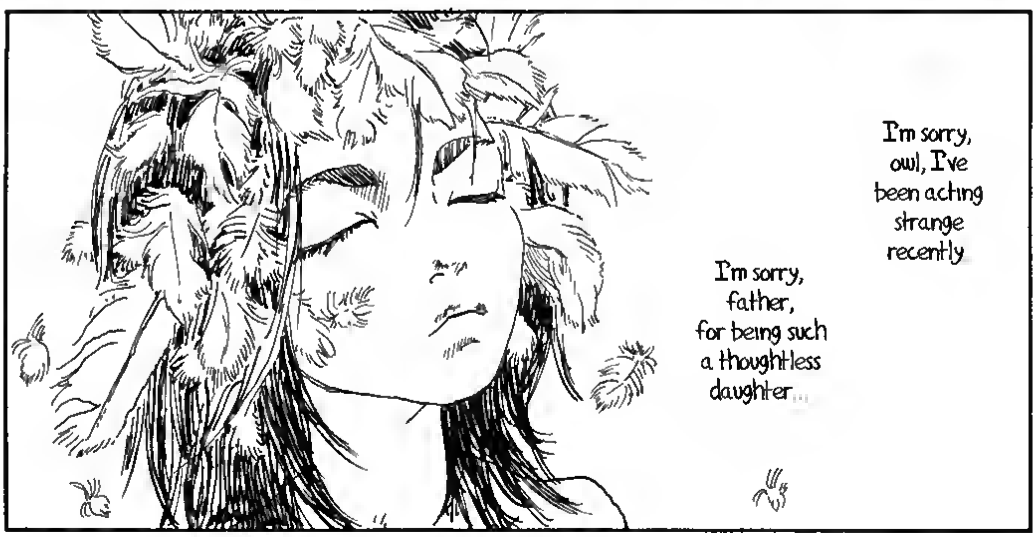

Ah!


Pluck
Pluck
Pluck
Pluck

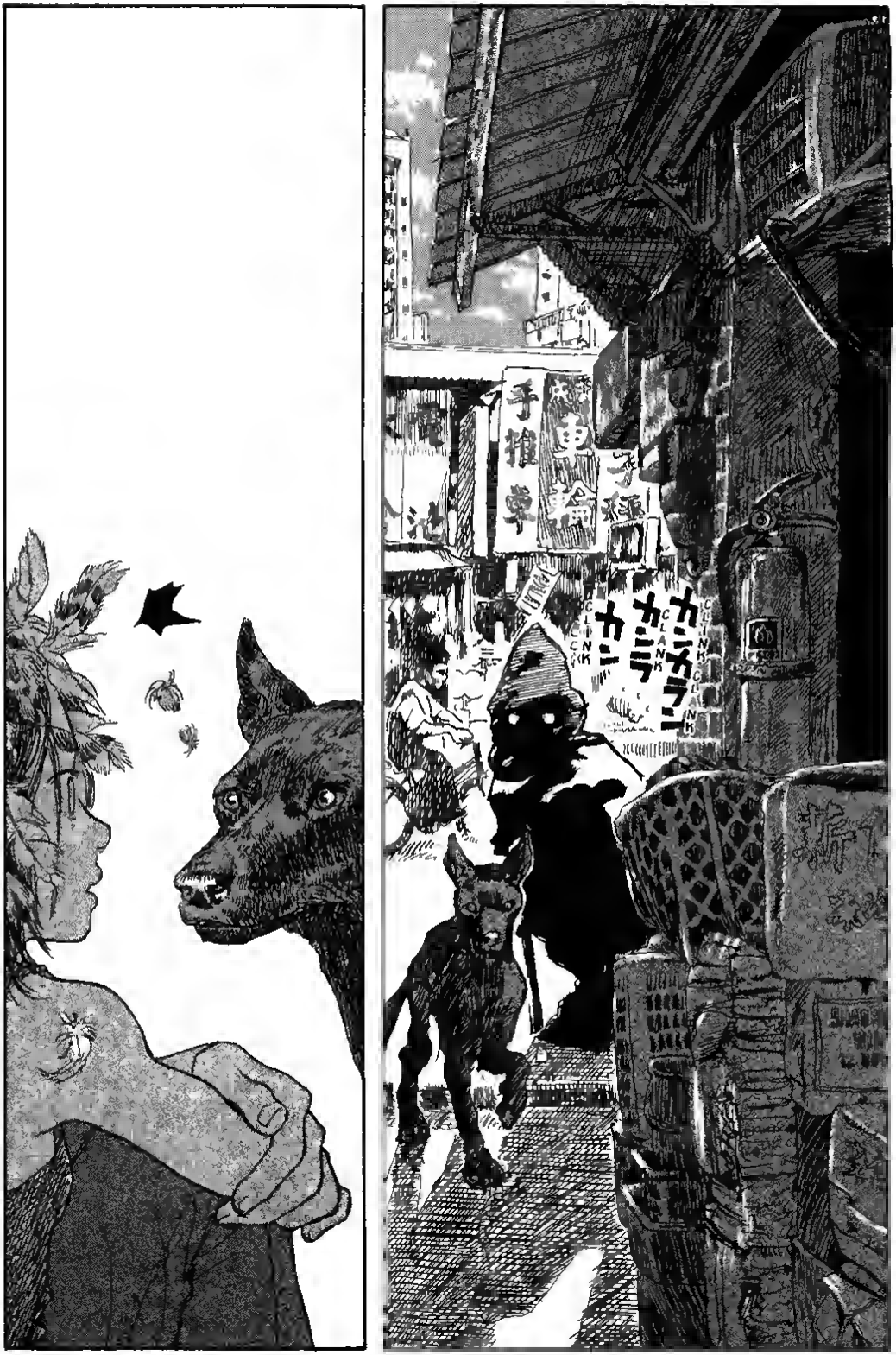

Sigh...
This is probably...
a curse from the owl. Because...


...I thought, "I wonder if it tastes like rabbit?"
when that happened,
(The feet of the owl resemble those of the rabbit, that's why they're called the rabbits of the trees)

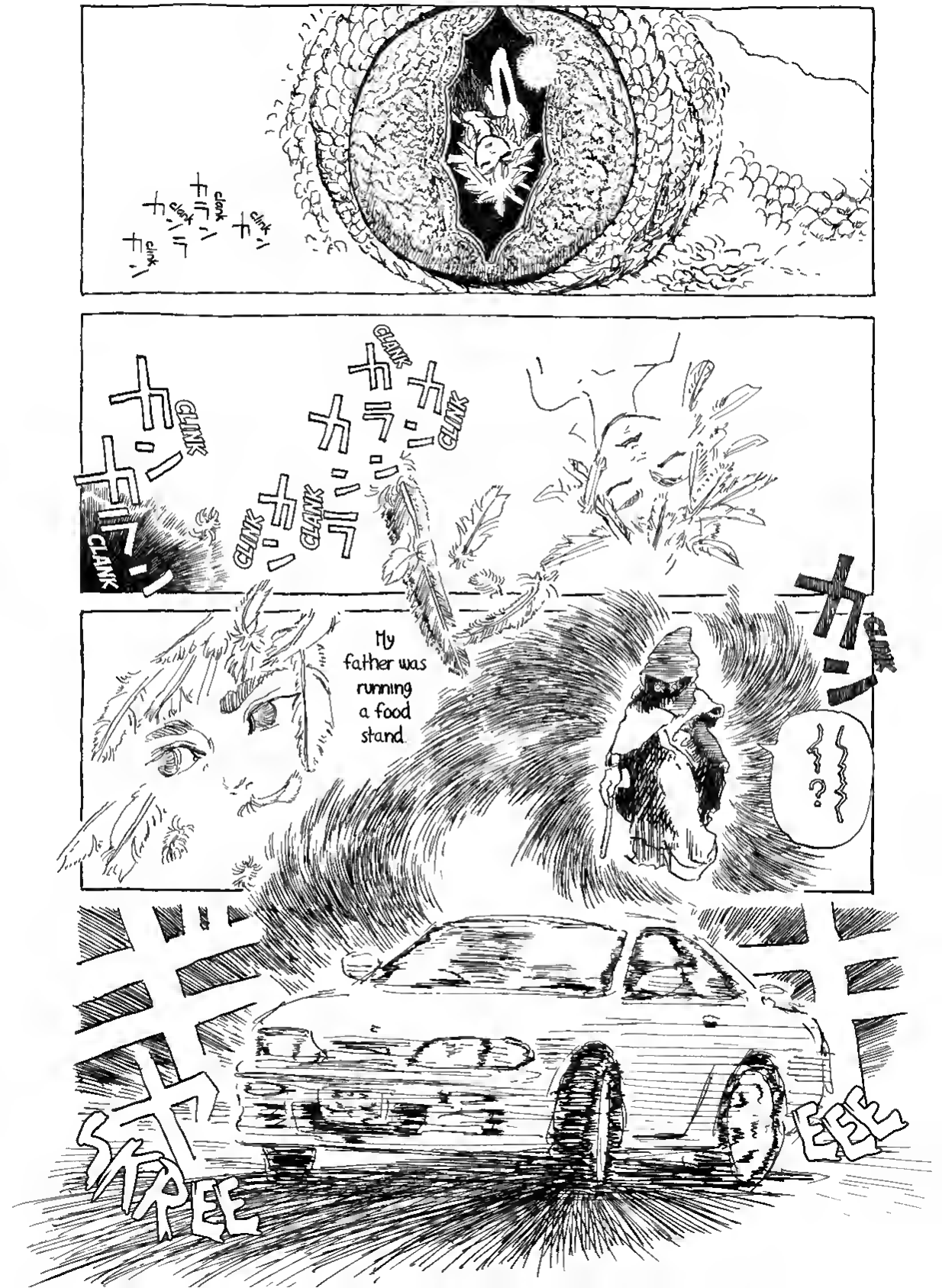

I'm sure that's why they're angry at me.

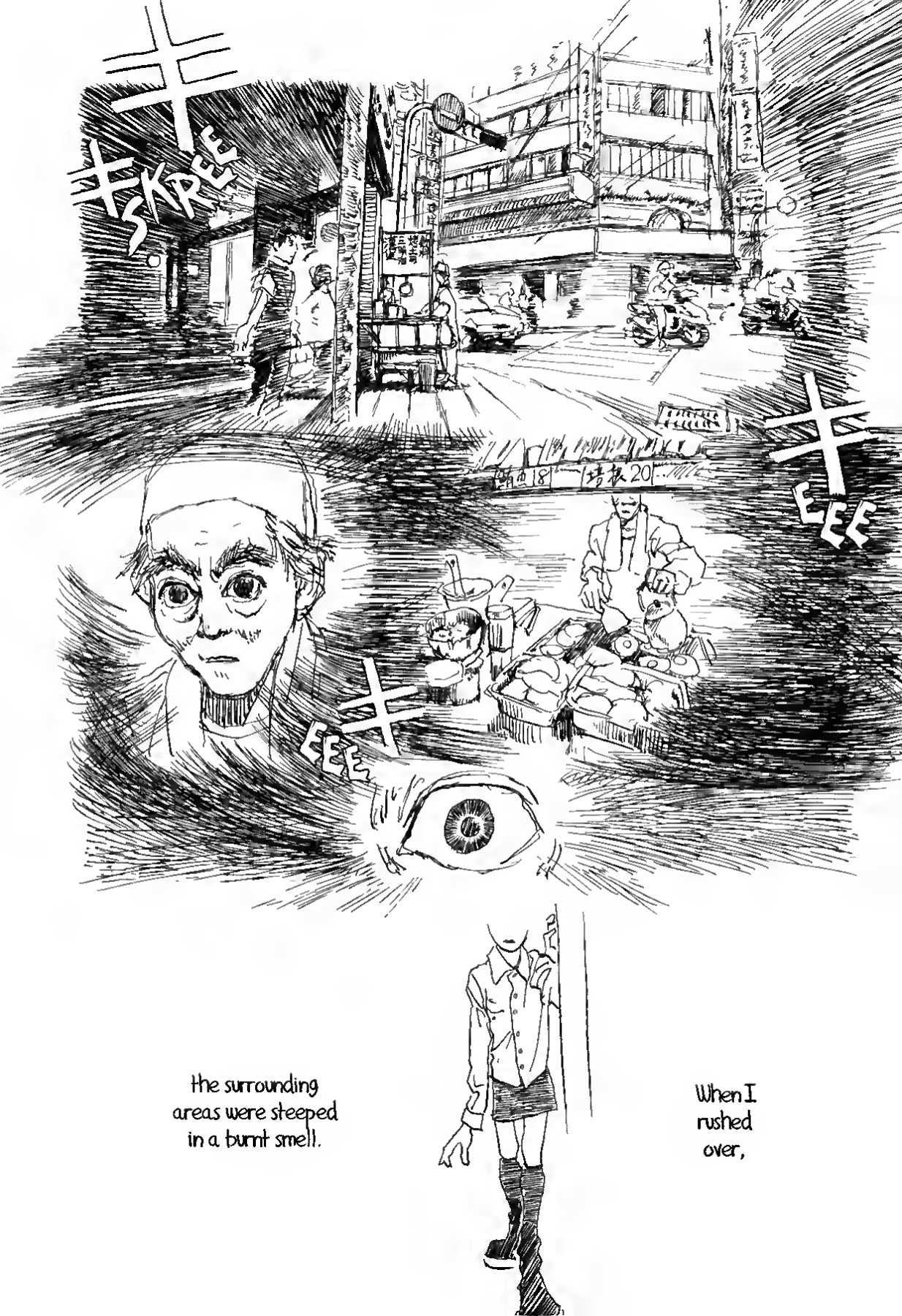

I'm sorry, father, for being such a thoughtless daughter...
I'm sorry, owl, I've been acting strange recently

What should I do?
カンカラン
clink
clank
clink
カンカラン
clank
clink
clank
カン
clink
clank
dum


CLINK CLANK
カンカラン
CLANK
カンラ
CLINK
カン
CLINK

By chance, this little fellow
caught sight of you yesterday.
Ahh. I've finally found you.
far away.
seems so
Her voice...
He told me that there was another about to meet the same fate that had befallen us, despite having no such wish to.
He brought me to you.
CLANK


clank
clank
clank
clank
clank
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
My father was running a food stand
!?
SCREE
EEE



When I rushed over,

the surrounding areas were steeped in a burnt smell.

the aroma of the roasted seasoning, vegetables, and flesh was so savory that...

Nevertheless, at the time,

My father, along with the entirety of the food stand, went up in flames.

?

?

?

?

my stomach cried out.

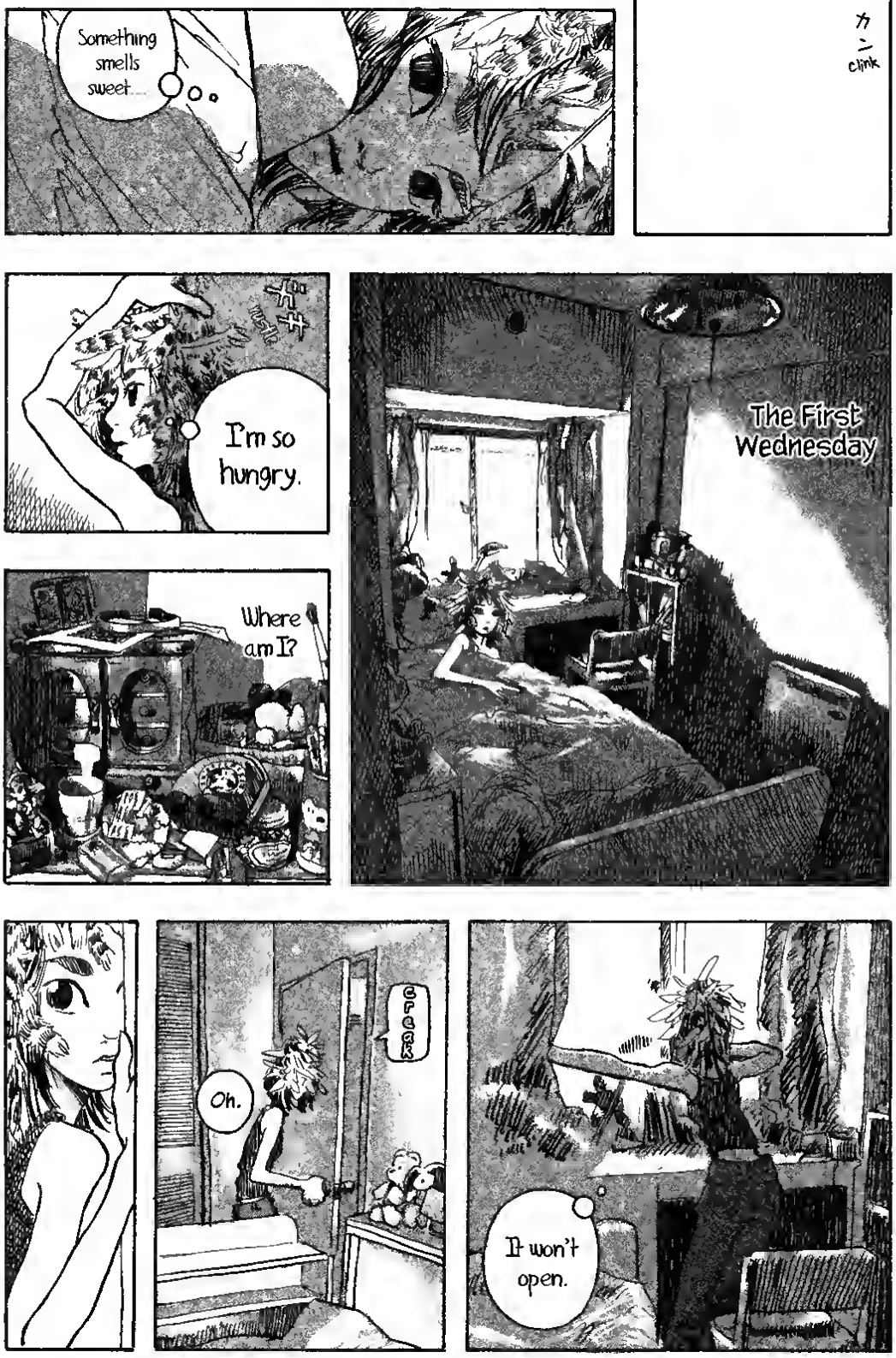
I'm sorry, father, for being such a thoughtless daughter

From that point onwards, every time I saw a dead body, I couldn't help but think of eating.

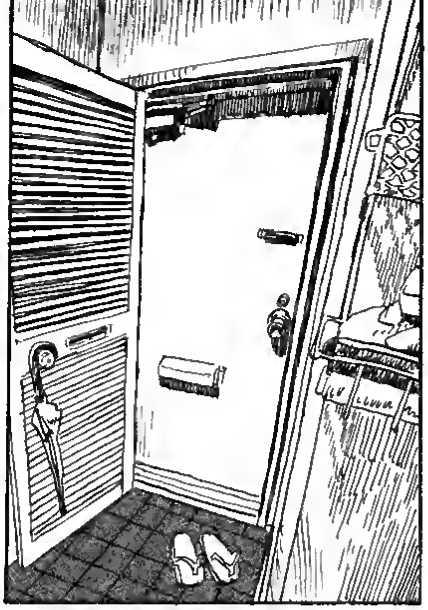
I imagine what the dead bodies rotting on the side of the roads taste like while I'm walking.
ooo
I even did it with the owl that I killed...
Me?
I am...
Who... who are you?

カン clink
カラン clank
カンラ カン
clink カン
カン clink

clink
カンカラン
clank
カンラカン
clink
カンカラン
clank
カンラカン

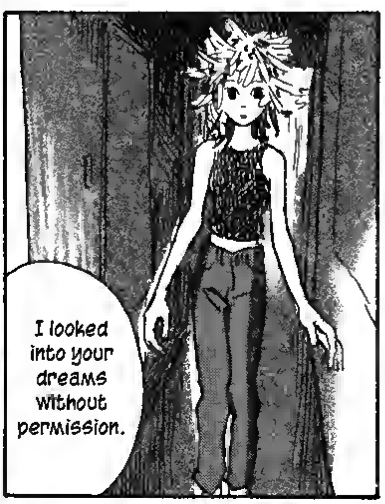

Something smells sweet...
カニ
clink
ぐぅ
I'm so hungry.
The First Wednesday
Where am I?
Oh.
CLACK
It won't open.

An apartment?



Come over here.

I'm sorry.


I looked into your dreams without permission.

I apologize for my appearance. The condition of my body is quite poor...
Hmm.
THUMP

I am Miyako.
And... Ruukii.

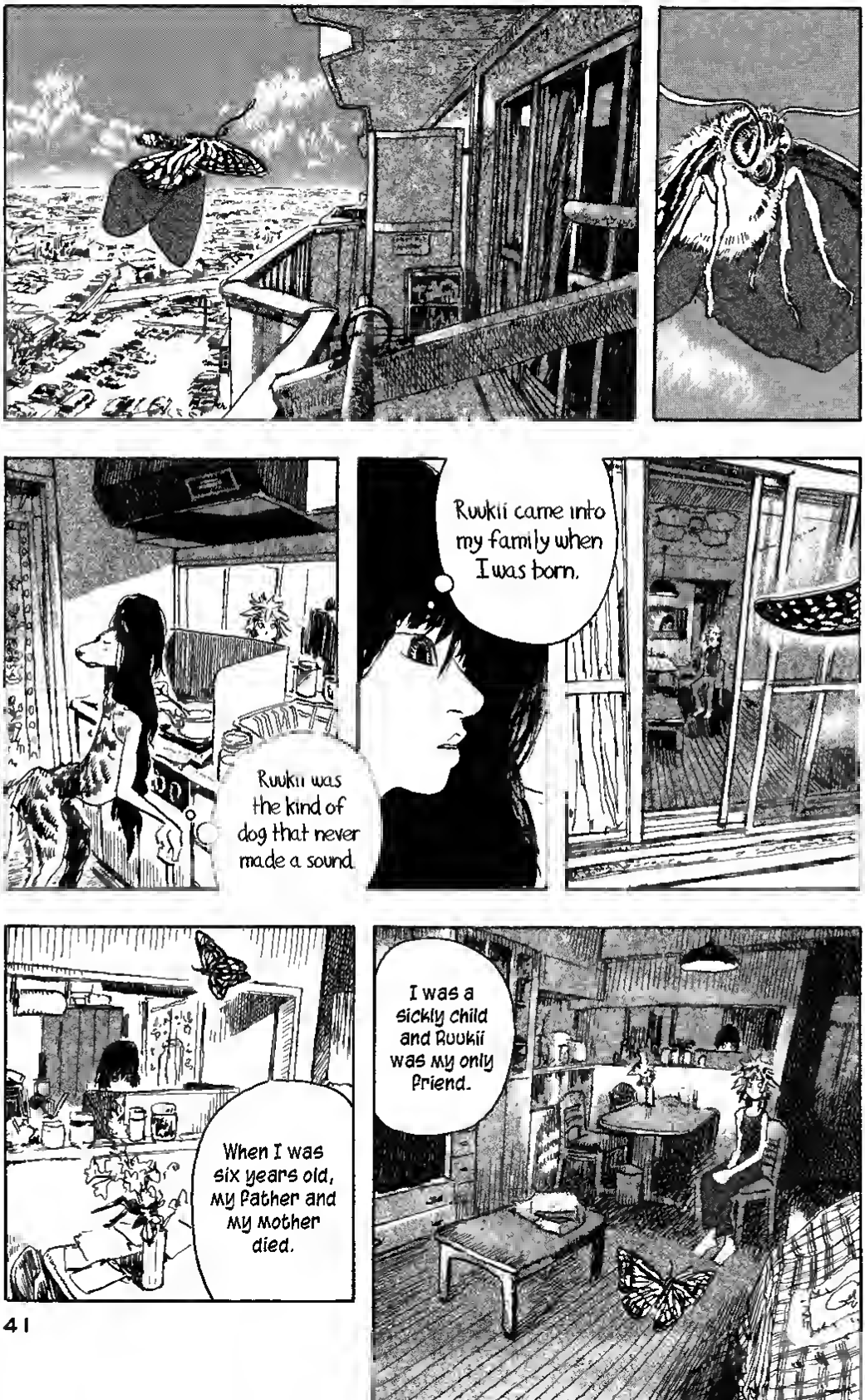
The one who found you was a stray dog, I have sent him home already...

Don't be afraid...

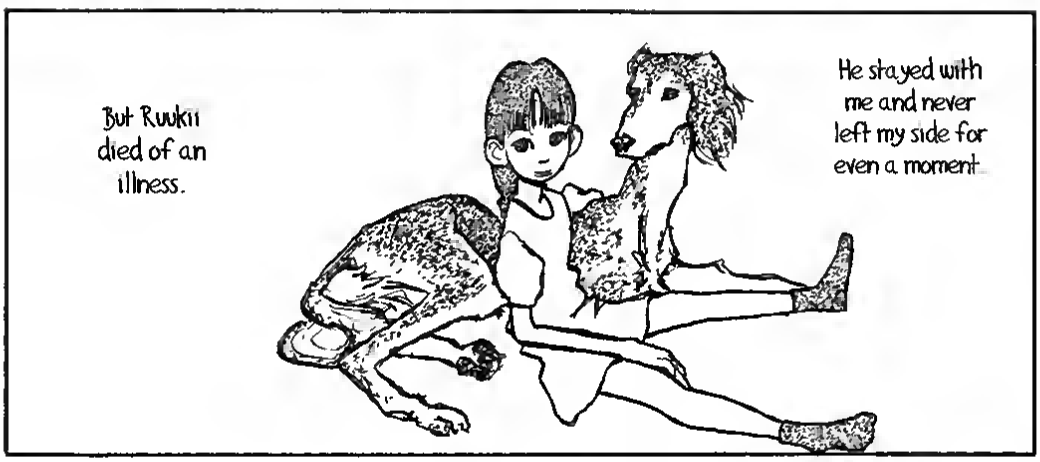
eventually your body and the spirit that clings to it will fuse completely.

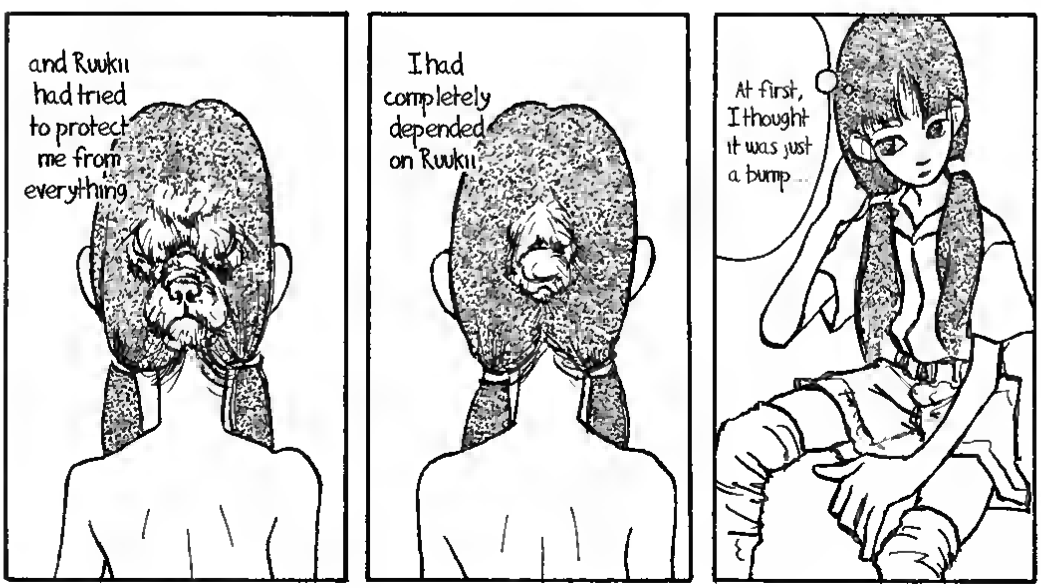
If things continue as they are,
I want to lend you my strength,
so that you do not end up like me.

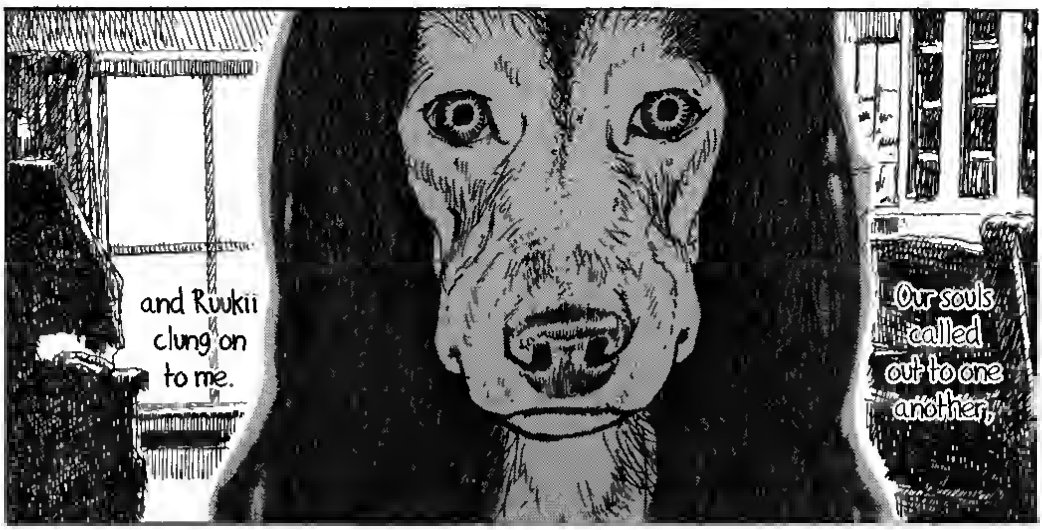
This is an aphrodisiac of the anima.
Its sweet scent pulls forth the soul.
It'll arouse the memories that are sleeping at the bottom of your heart,
and aid in stepping into your dreams.
It should ultimately pull forth the spirit that clings onto you,
and now lies dormant in the deepest recesses of your body.


Ruukii came into my family when I was born.
Ruukii was the kind of dog that never made a sound.
When I was six years old, my father and my mother died.
I was a sickly child and Ruukii was my only friend.

Ruukii responded to those feelings.
After that, I sought for Ruukii to replace my parents.


But Ruukii died of an illness.
He stayed with me and never left my side for even a moment.


and Ruukii had tried to protect me from everything.
I had completely depended on Ruukii.
At first, I thought it was just a bump...


and Ruukii clung on to me.
Our souls called out to one another,

With a body like this, the corporeal burdens are much too great.

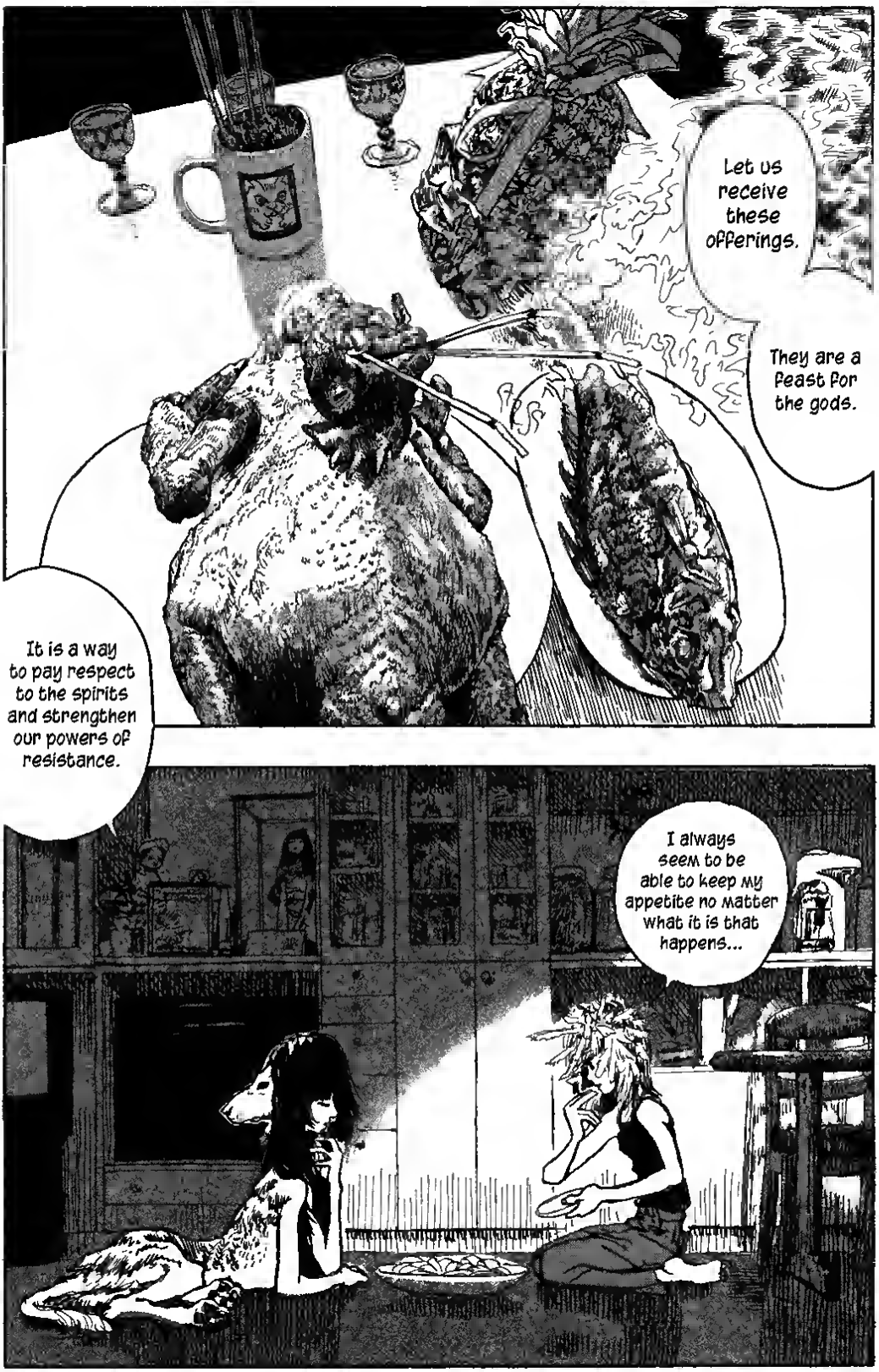
I'm sure I don't have long to live...

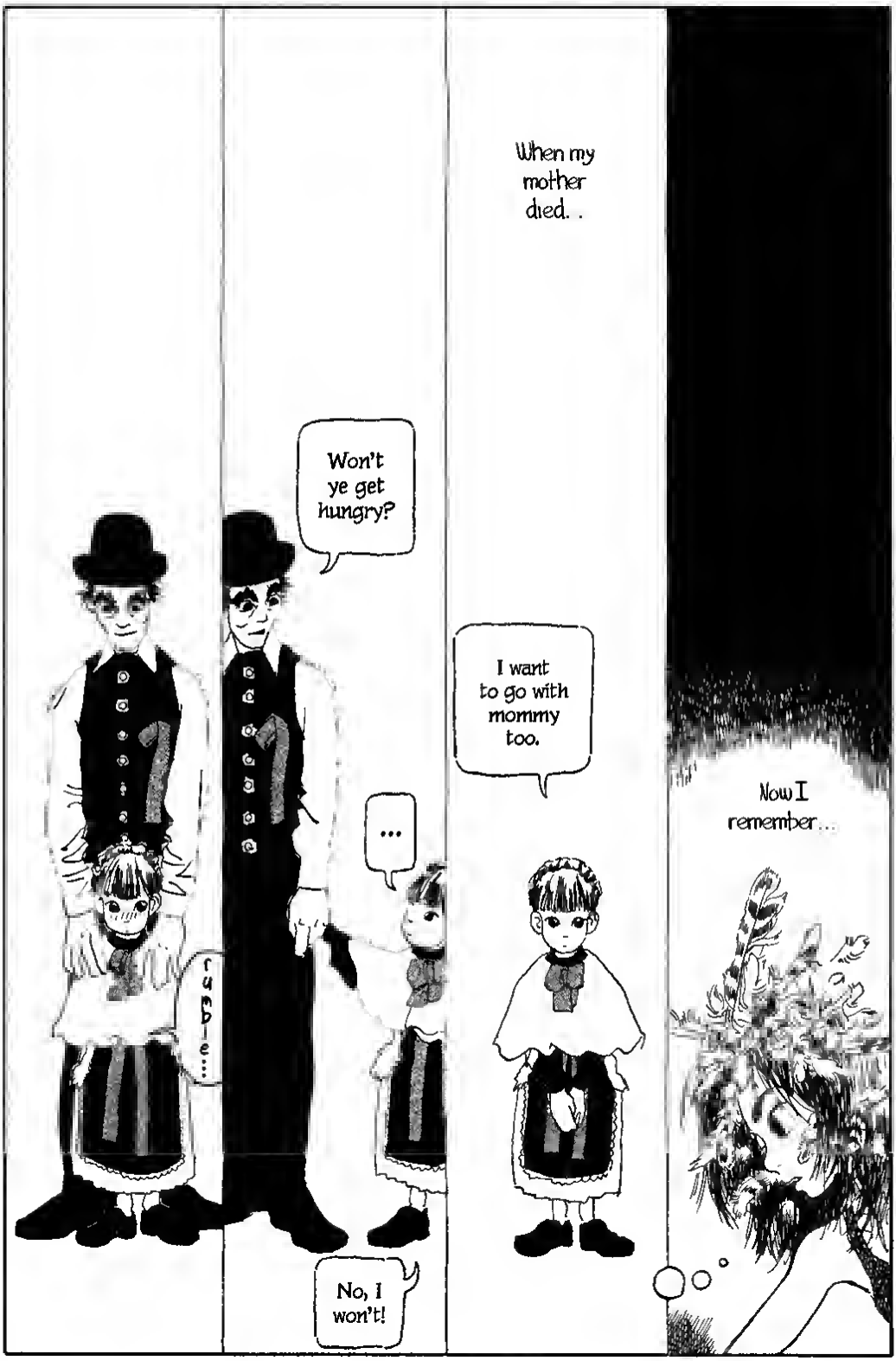
What you see before you
is the end result of a being possessed.

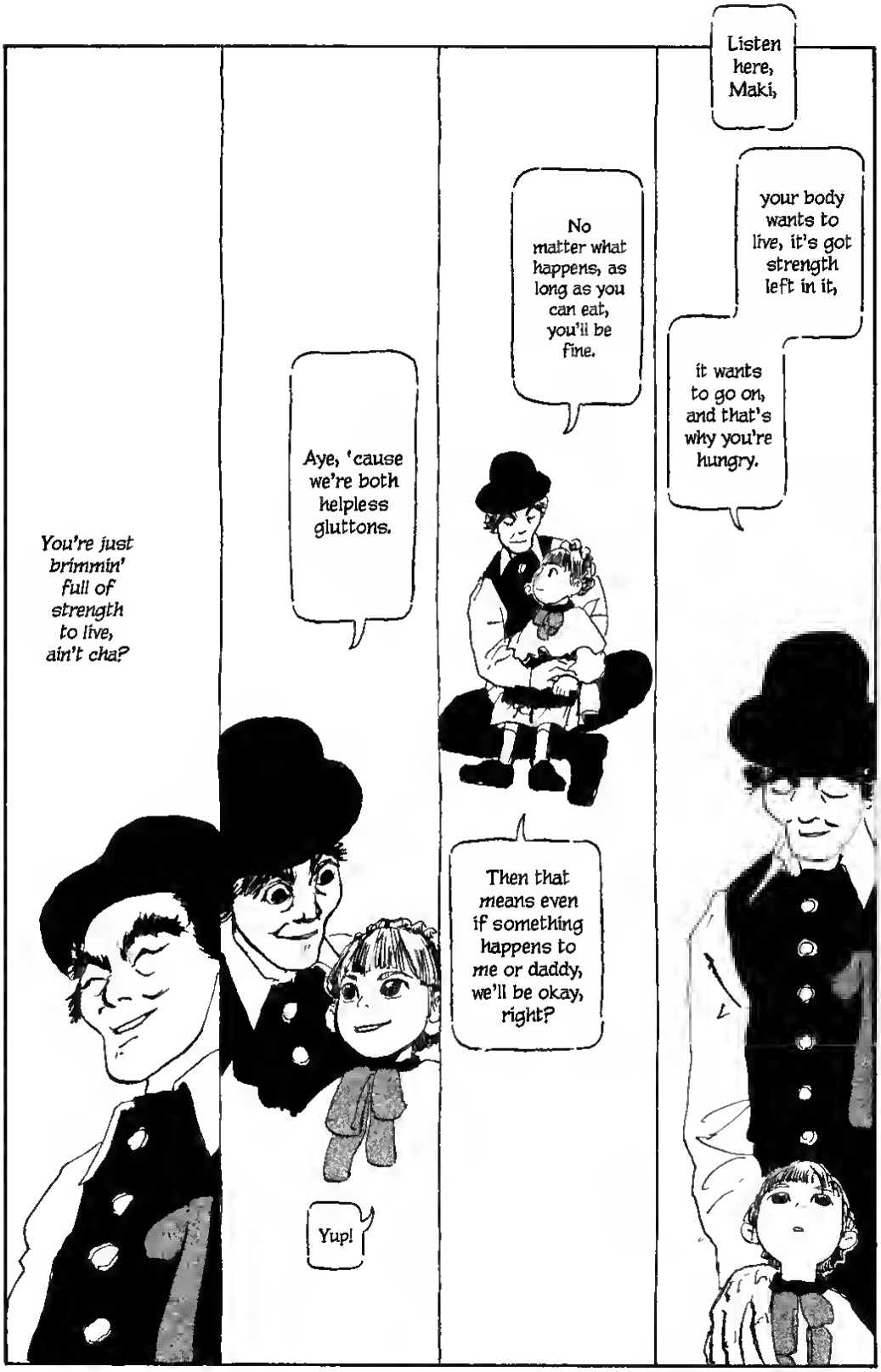
But this is the outcome of what Ruuki and I wished for...
I know how to rid you of the spirit that possesses you.
and I can also carry it out.
if you so wish...

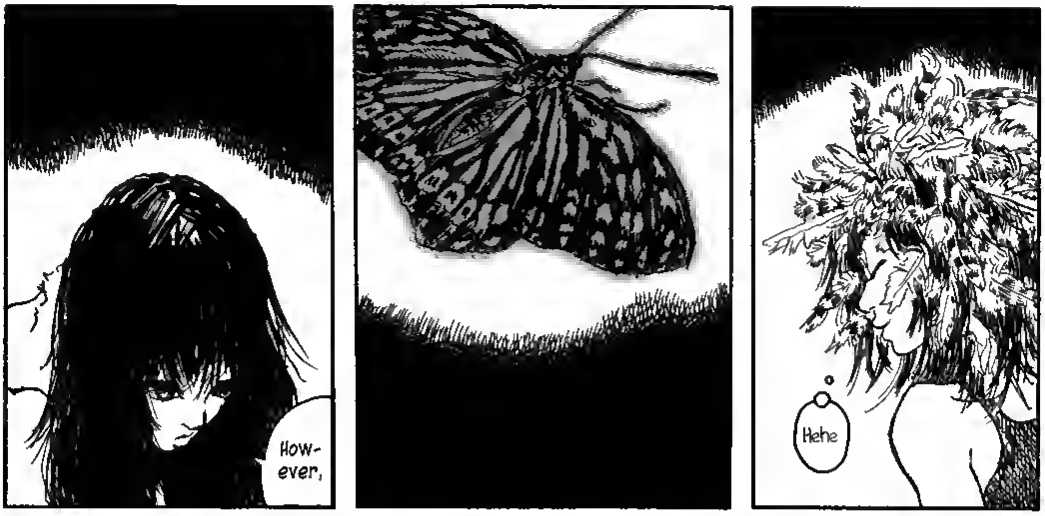
will I be able to come back again next week?
If we do it,
...
Um,
Yes, most likely.
?
Wonderful. That way I'll be able to treat you.
I'll bring some of the ecrevisse* from work for lunch in return.

*A type of crawfish dish

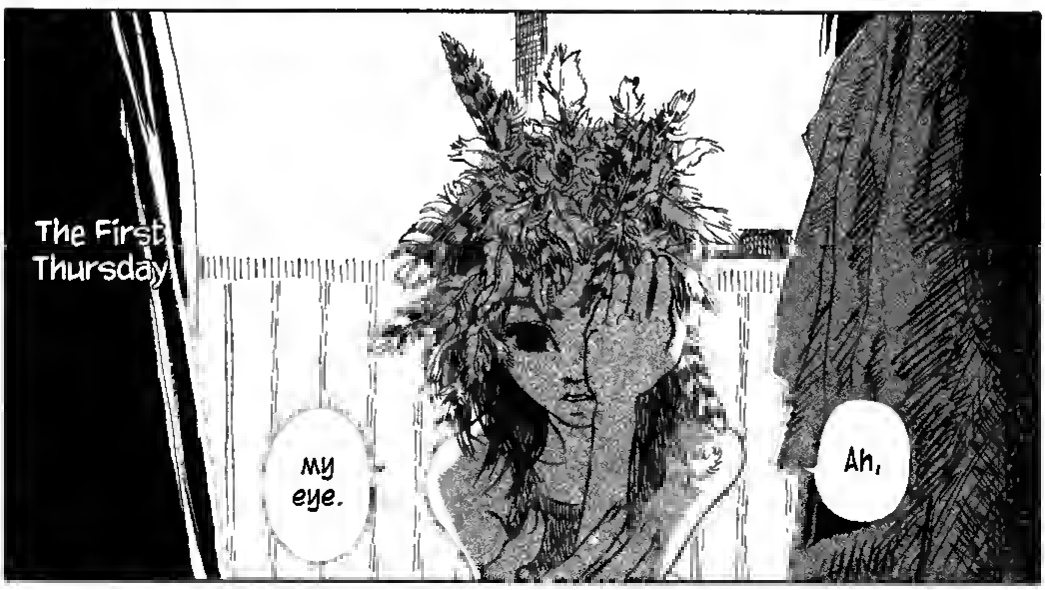

Let us receive these offerings.
They are a feast for the gods.
It is a way to pay respect to the spirits and strengthen our powers of resistance.
I always seem to be able to keep my appetite no matter what it is that happens...


When my mother died..
Now I remember...
I want to go with mommy too.
...
Won't ye get hungry?
No, I won't!
Sadie...


Listen here, Maki,
your body wants to live, it's got strength left in it,
it wants to go on, and that's why you're hungry.
No matter what happens, as long as you can eat, you'll be fine.
Then that means even if something happens to me or daddy, we'll be okay, right?
Aye, 'cause we're both helpless gluttons.
Yup!
You're just brimmin' full of strength to live, ain't cha?

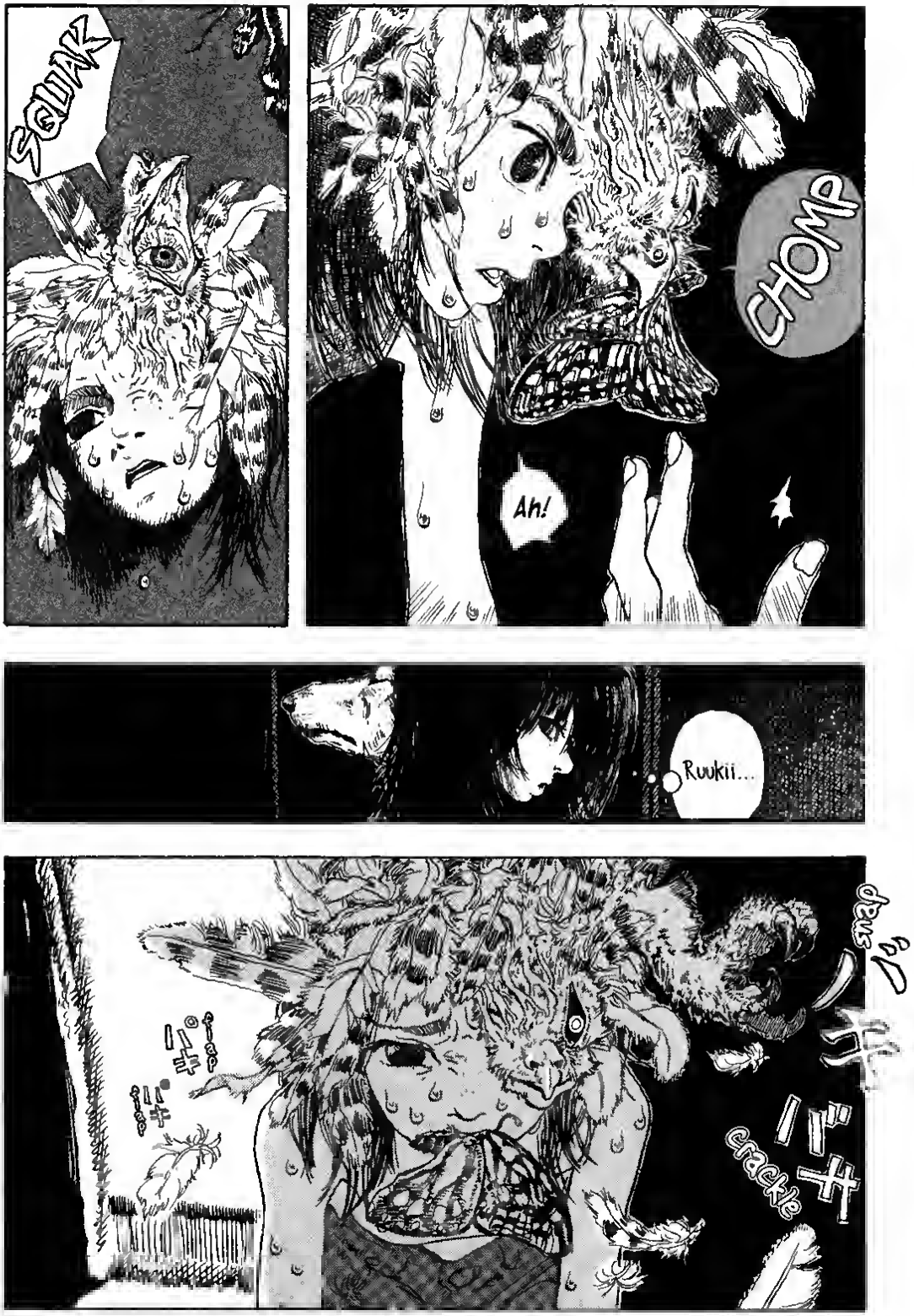

How-
ever,
Hehe

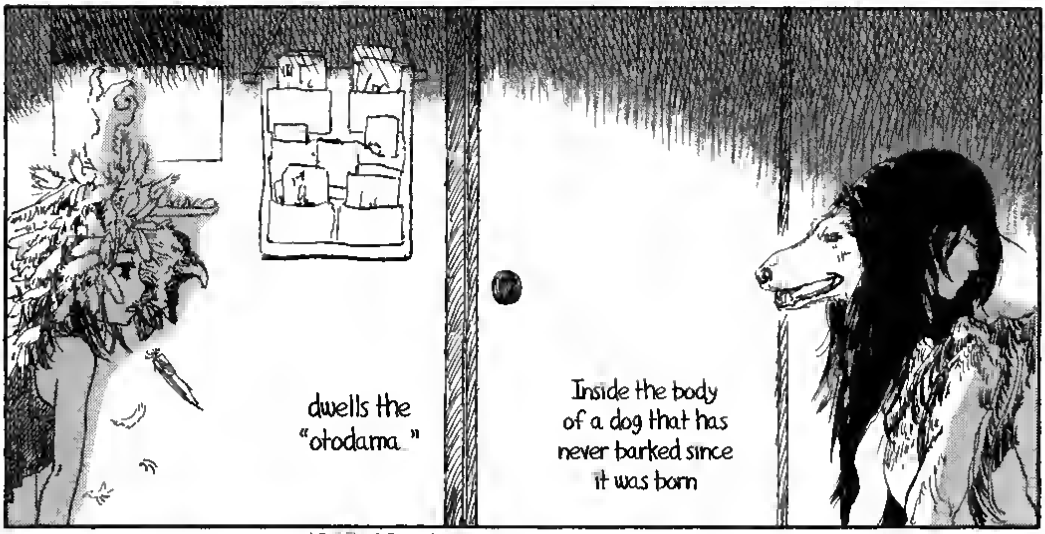
But as long as the spirit separates, it should no longer be a matter of life or death.
even if the spirit is torn away, there may still be some aftereffects.


The First Thursday
my eye.
Ah,

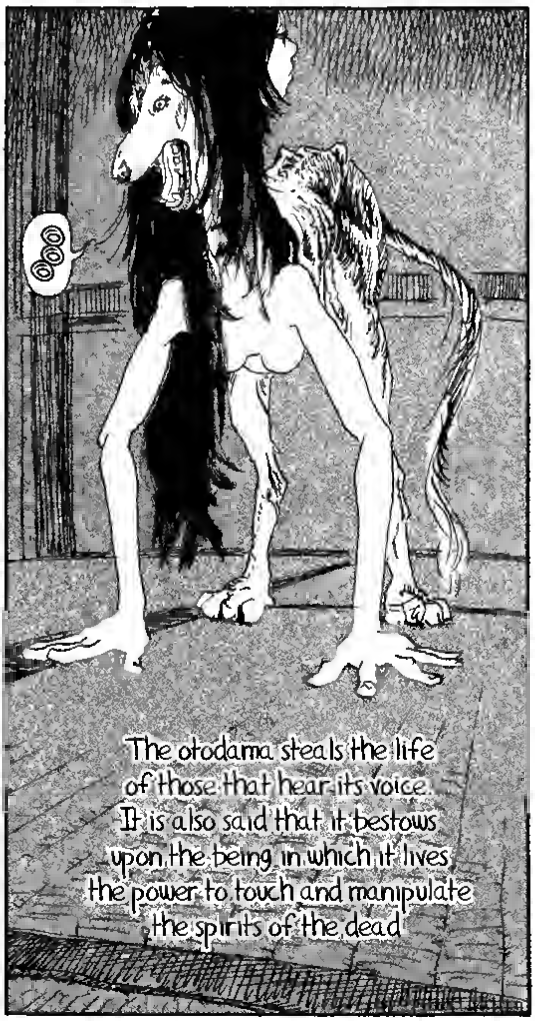
It seems like the aphrodisiac is working.
SQUAK
The clinging spirit that was lying dormant in the depth of your body...
has floated up onto the surface.

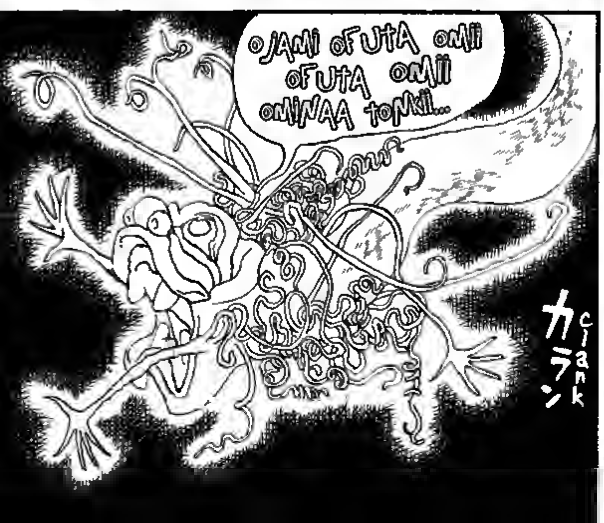
Take this in your mouth:
a butterfly.
It has long been said to be the avatar of the soul.
Now let us tear away the spirit that has attached itself to you.
Put this in your mouth so that your own soul isn't lost when we tear away the spirit.
It shall act as a seal.

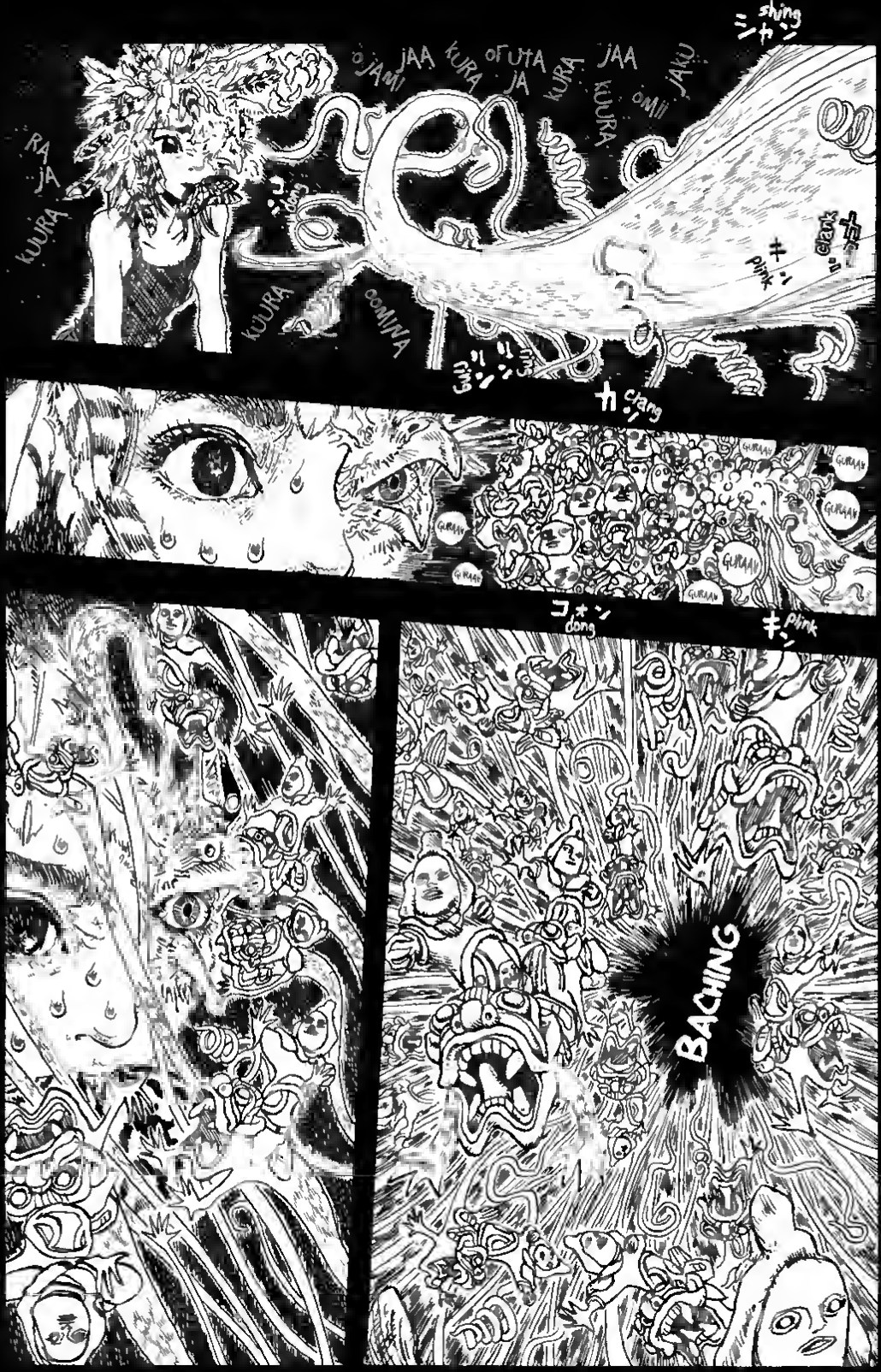

SQUAK
CHOMP
Ah!
Ruukii...
crack

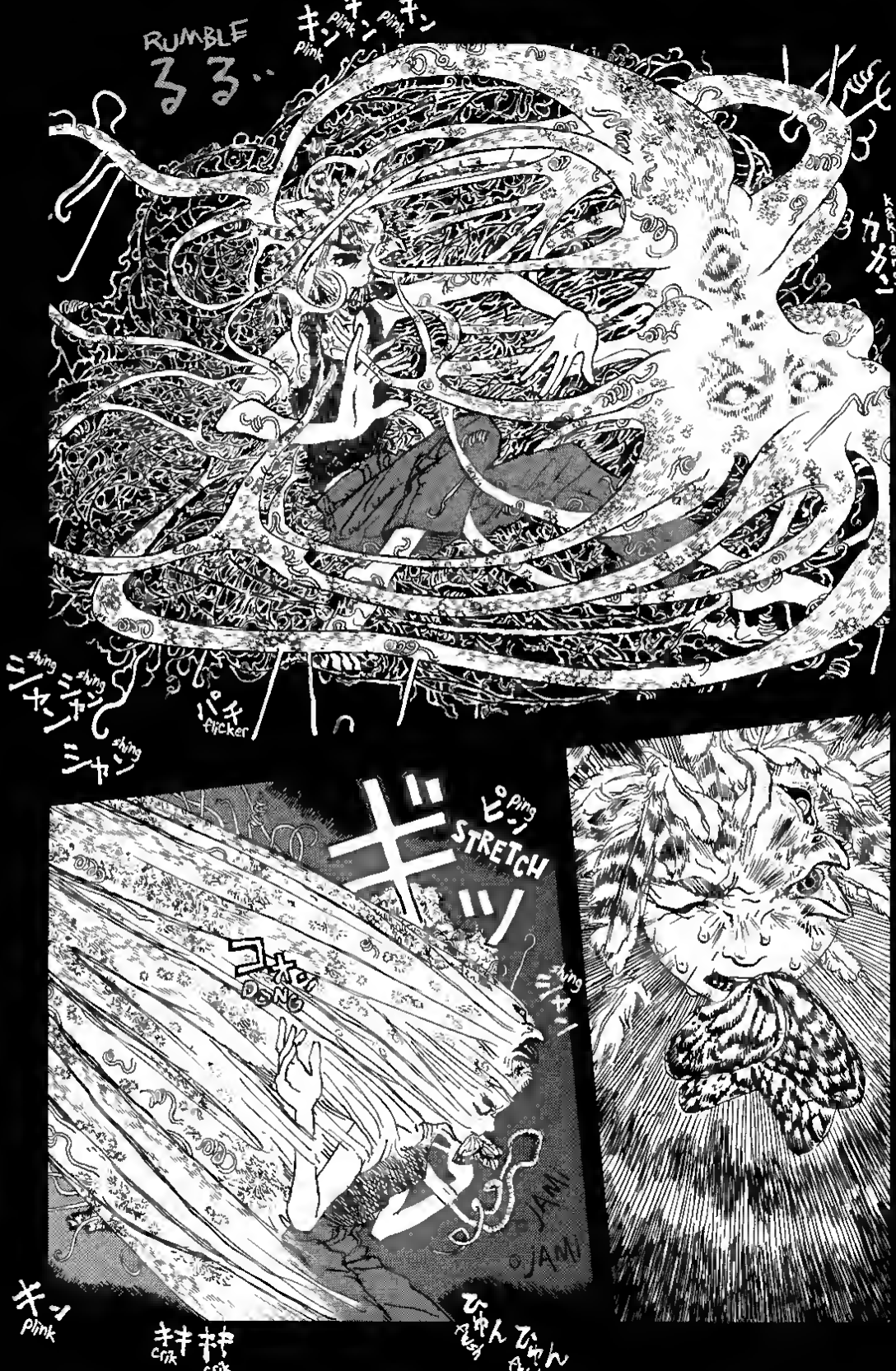


*Spirit of Sound


ooo
The otodama steals the life of those that hear its voice. It is also said that it bestows upon the being in which it lives the power to touch and manipulate the spirits of the dead

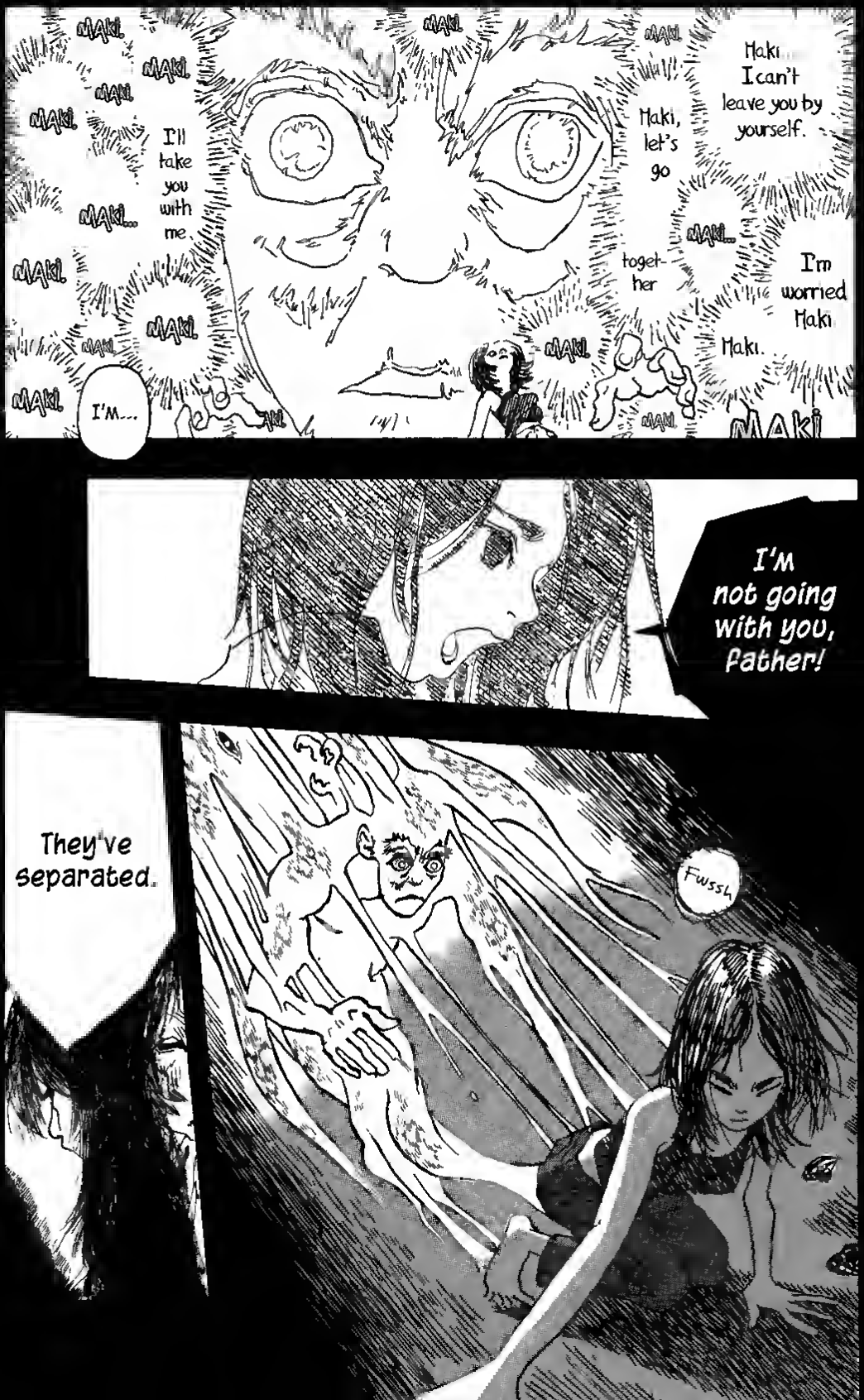


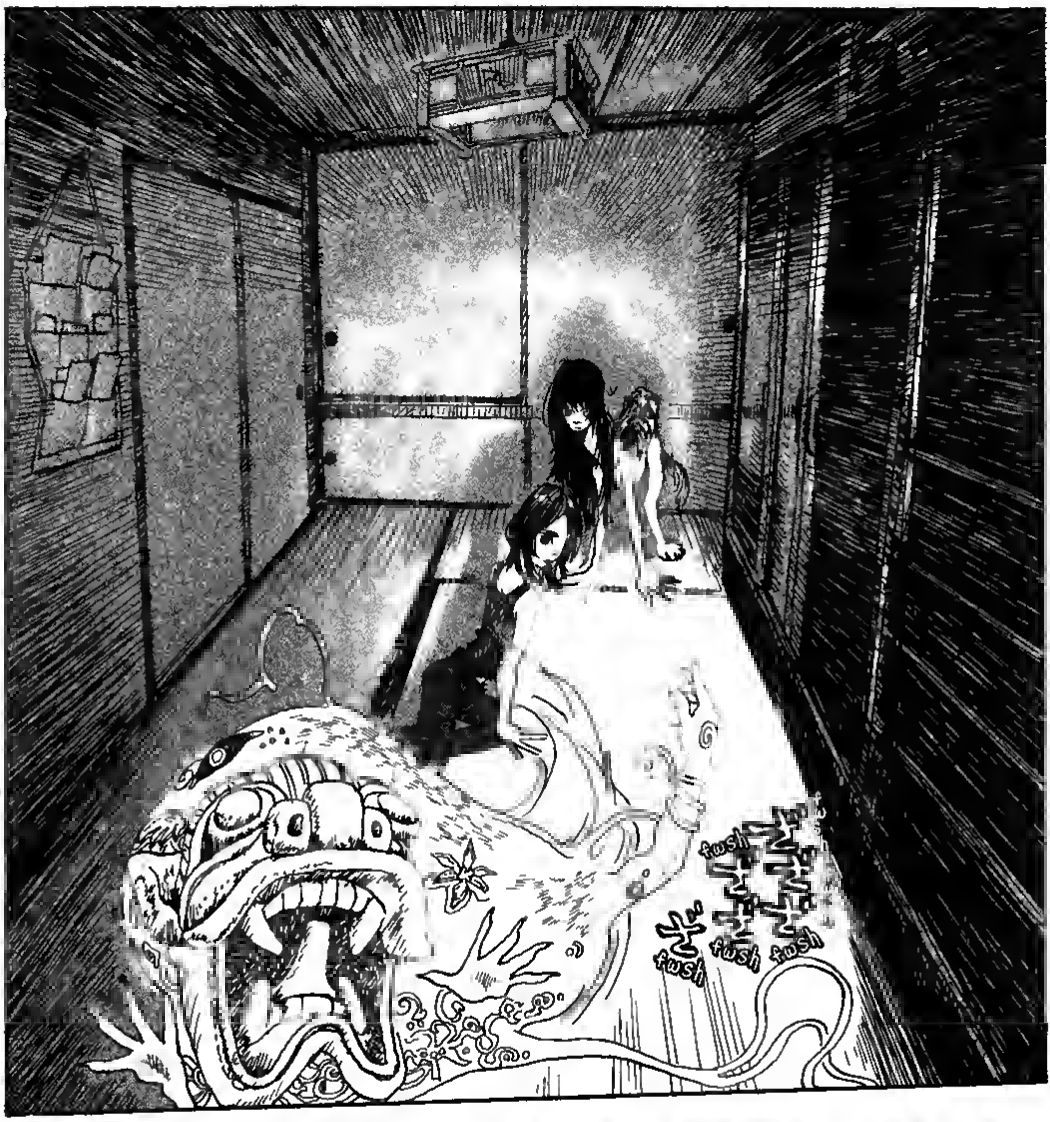

shing
シャン
JAA
KURA
oTUTA
JA
KURA
JAA
KURA
oMii
JAKU
oJAMI
RA
JA
KUURA
KUURA
oOMIVA
clank
ガン
pink
キン
GUU
ン
ン
ン
カ
clang
GURAAA
GURAAA
GURAAA
GURAAA
GURAAA
GURAAA
コ
dong
ン
キン
pink
BACHING


RUMBLE
ゴゴゴ
キン キン キン
Plink Plink Plink
カカン
kakiang
シャン シャン シャン
shing shing shing
パチ
flicker
ピン
ping
ビッ
STRETCH
コトン
DONG
シャン
shing
JANI
JANI
キン
Plink
キキキ
crik crik
ぴゅん
Push
ぴゅん
Push

shing シャン
shing シャン
shing シャン
shing シャン
shing シャン
clatter ガラン
シャン shing
ギリ creak
ブン ring
リン snap
リン snap
ギリ creak
クシュ
TOON KIRI
ギリ creak
キュ squak
キュ squak
キュ squak
ピン ping
キキ skree
パキン snap
Ah!
shing シャン
shing シャン
shing シャン
キキン skree
カシャ flash
ゴン dong
バキ crackle
shing シャン
shing シャン
びゅん swoosh
びゅん swoosh
ハリ sizzle
リン ring
リン ring
メリメリ rip
rip
JAMI OTUJA
JAKAKUJURA
JAKAAKUJURA
OMUJAKUJA
JAAKUJURA
TOMUWAA
creak
キリ crick
キリ crick
キリ crick
リン ring
パキン crackle

Maki...
pink pink pink
There are several minds and souls intertwined and they won't come apart.
It's not just the bird...
Is this... another dream...?
I'm worried about you, Maki.
I'm going to be fine, dad
I'm so anxious.
Maki
Maki...
Maki...
Maki...
I'm sorry I left you all alone
Father!
Father?
If the souls and the spirits keep pulling against each other and can't separate,
then her soul will be taken along as well like this.
If there is just a small tear in the seams somewhere, then maybe...
kaching
Father?


MAKI
MAKI
MAKI
MAKI
MAKI
I'll take you with me.
MAKI...
MAKI
MAKI
MAKI
I'M...
MAKI
MAKI
Maki, let's go
MAKI
MAKI
Maki I can't leave you by yourself.
MAKI...
I'm worried Maki
Maki.
MAKI
I'M not going with you, father!
They've separated.
Fwss4

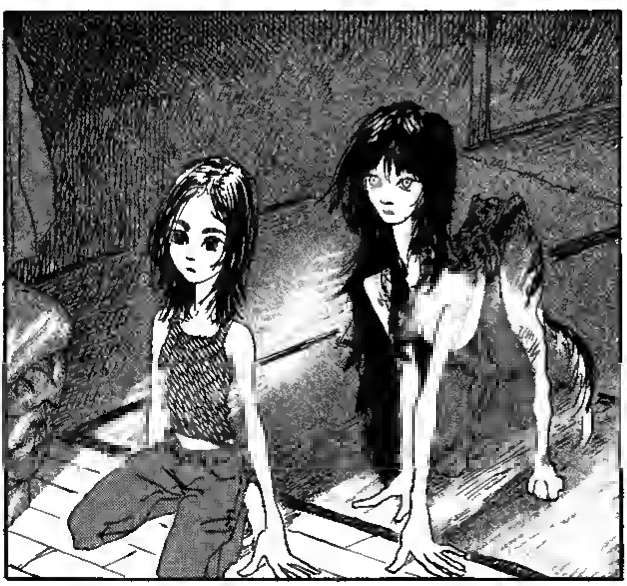

fwsh
fwsh
fwsh
fwsh

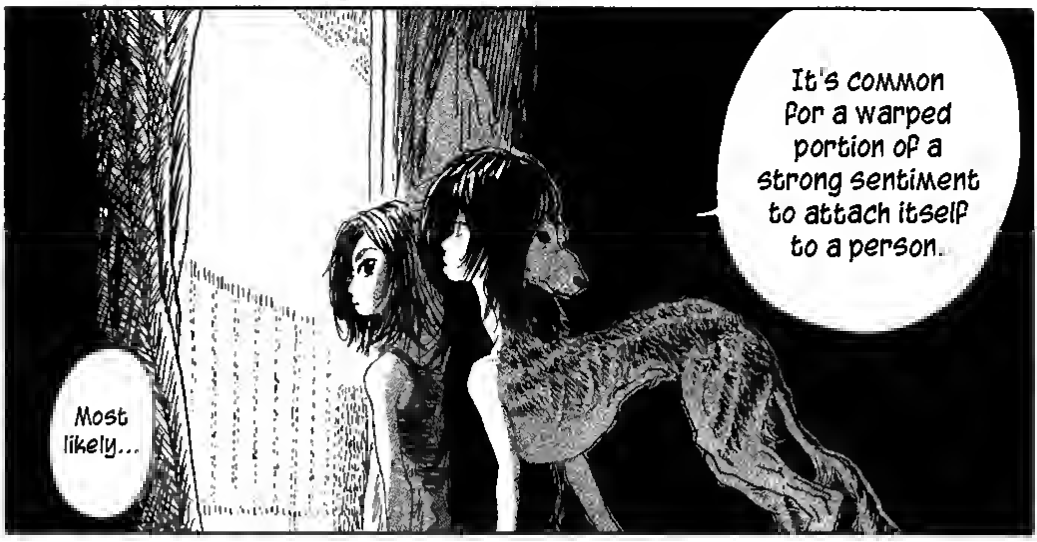
fwoosh fwoosh

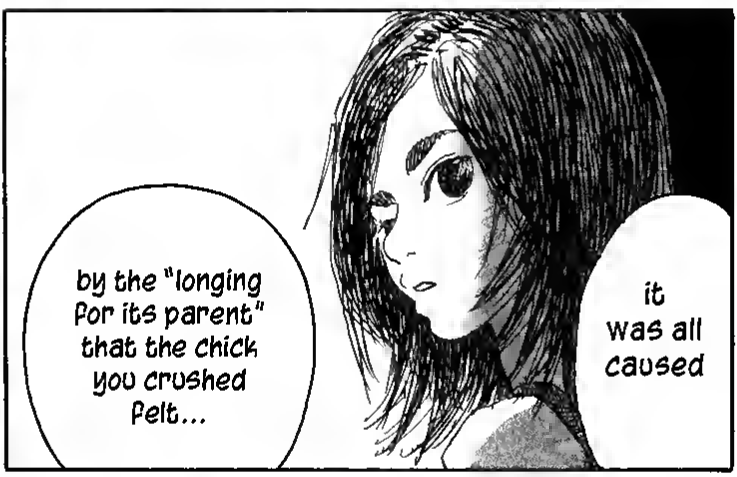
Fwish Fwish Fwish

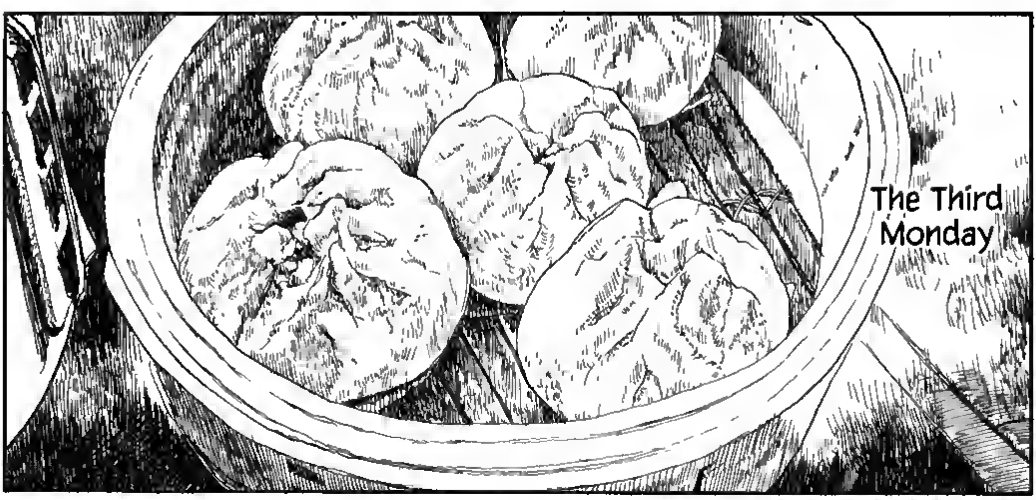
Fwish Fwish Fwish

Was that... My father?



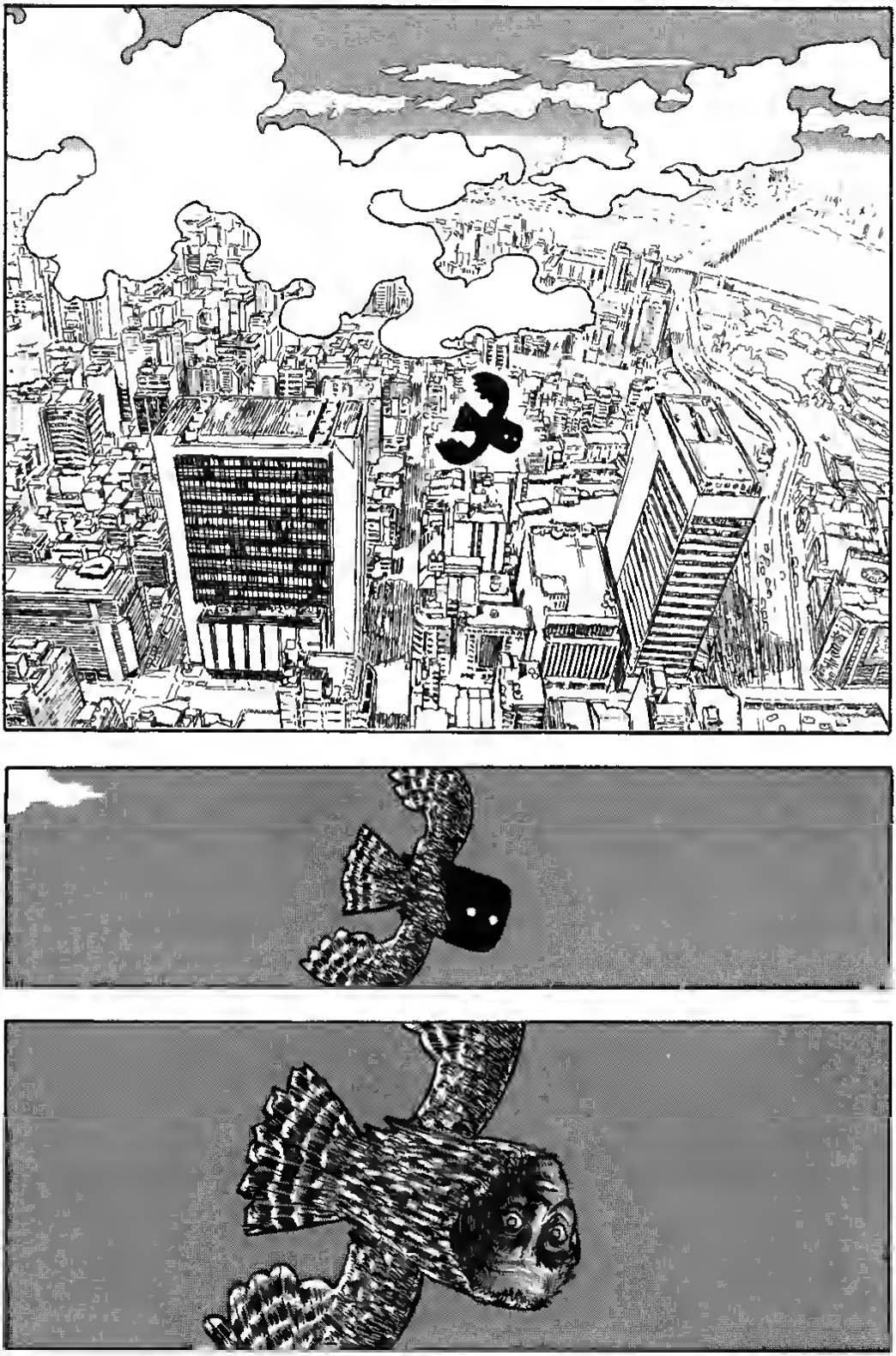

It's common for a warped portion of a strong sentiment to attach itself to a person.
Most likely...


by the "longing for its parent" that the chick you crushed felt...
it was all caused


The Third Monday

Father,
breakfast today is steamed buns stuffed with egg and stir-fried vegetables, sweet leeks, and green tea.
Two aftereffects appeared.
Time to break fast.

...and the other is...
Where's Mister Santa?
No matter how many times I've plucked it, it keeps growing back.
One of them is a single feather on my head.
Where's Mister Santa?
I believe they're probably some kind of ghost.
for some reason, I can see some strange little creatures.
For now, they are harmless.
Six
Six
Six
rustle
rustle
rustle
Oh, well,
and the vegetables in the garden are doing well too.
The meal today was delicious,
And I ended up missing out on the ecre-visse
No matter how many times I visit Miyako, she never seems to be at home.



End

Spirits Flying in The Sky
Originally published in Afternoon 1998 May Issue

The Tears of Tarou, Killer of Bears, Stealer of Gods

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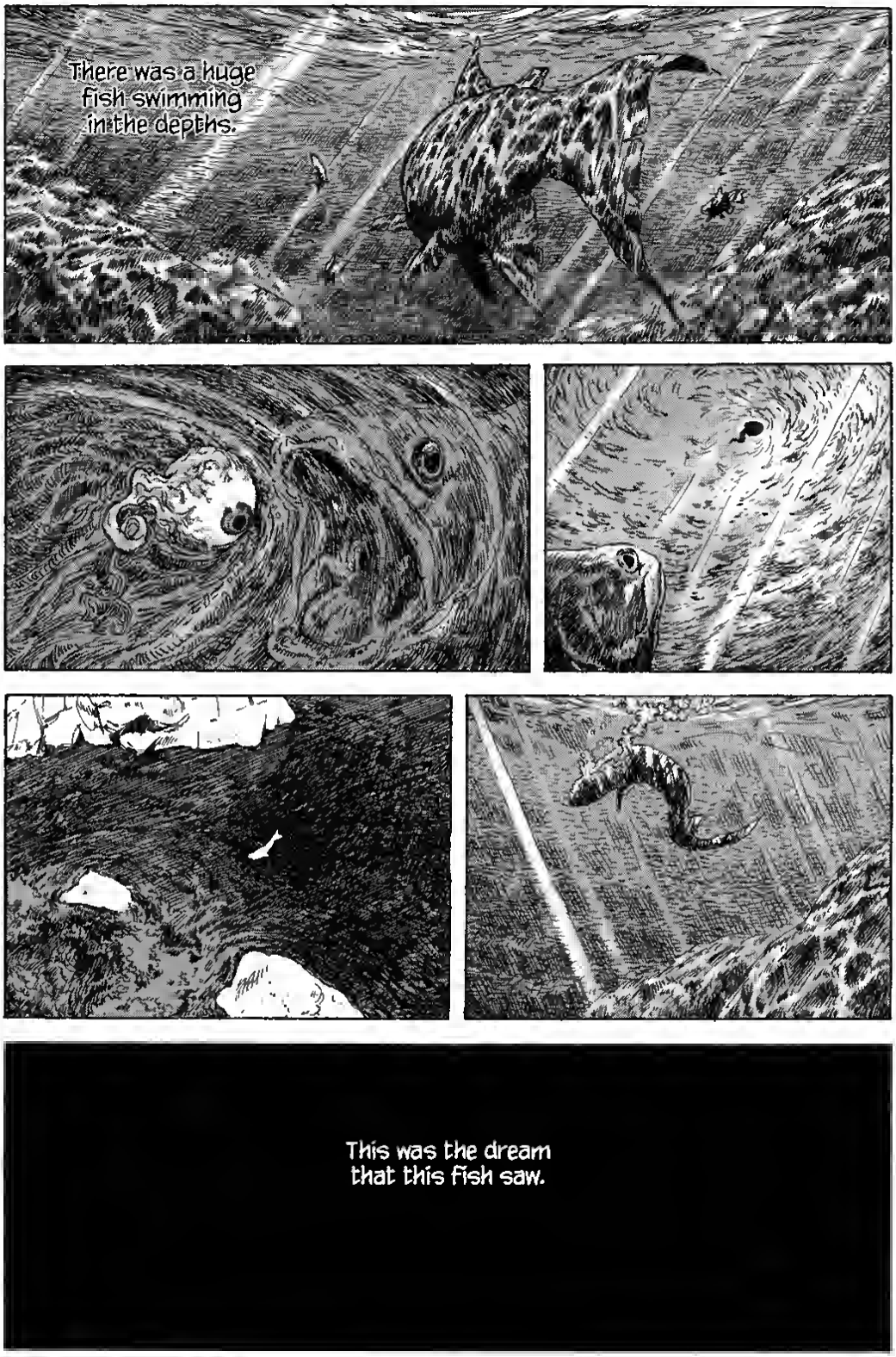
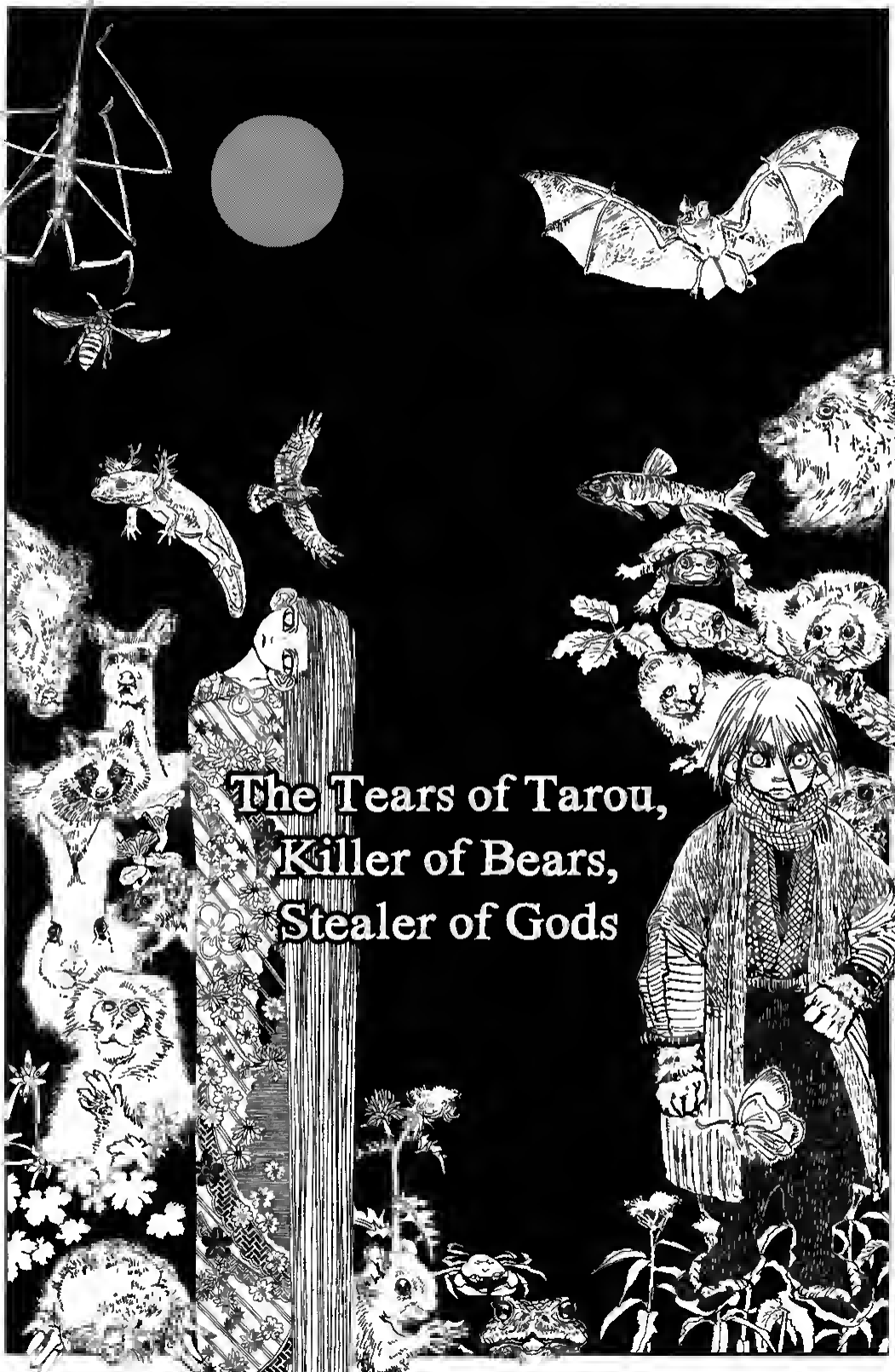
#illuminati-manga@irc.irchighway.net


There was a huge fish swimming in the depths.
This was the dream that this fish saw.


The Tears of Tarou,
Killer of Bears,
Stealer of Gods

By the time the youth returned home, his entire family had been slaughtered.
A gigantic bear had gone mad.

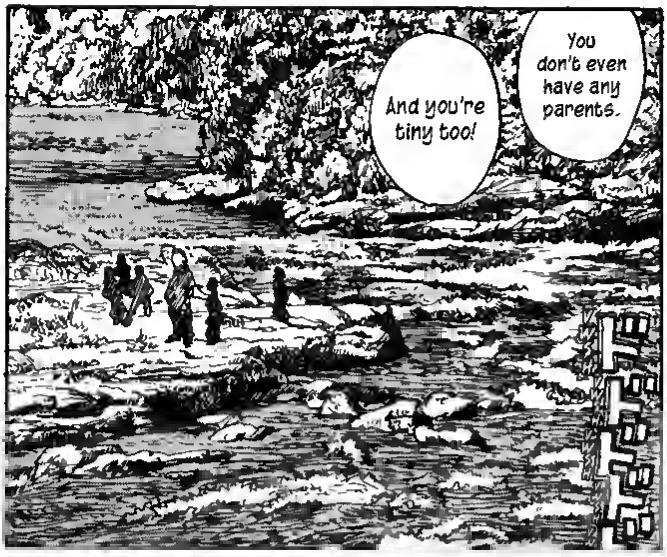
It was said that the youth had been possessed by the gods. With freakish strength, he smashed the bear's neck.

The name of the youth was Tarou.
However...

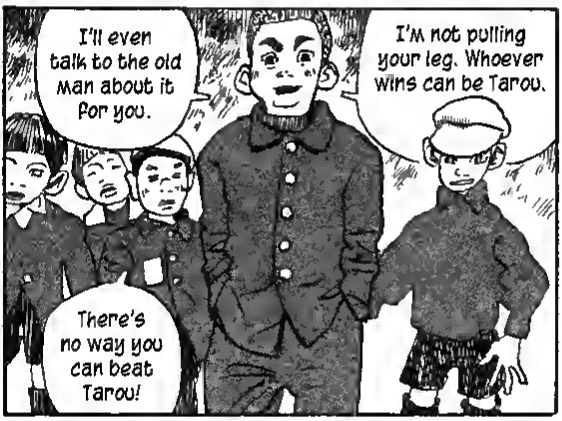
They would take the youth in, as he no longer had any relatives left.
When word of this spread, one family of wealthy farmers made a decision.
You mustn't forget this debt that you owe us.

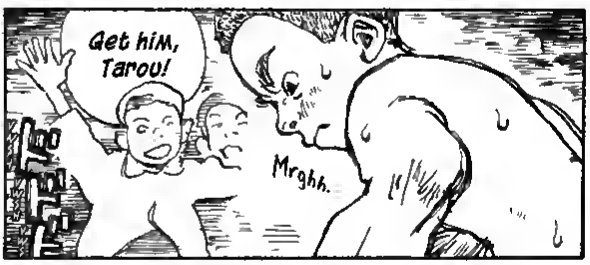
Hey, Bear killer.
From now on let's call you "Bear killer."
since the eldest son of the family was also named Tarou...
Bear killer.
Bear killer.
Bear killer.
Bear killer!
You brat.
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH
VWSH

You're sure?
You promise, right?

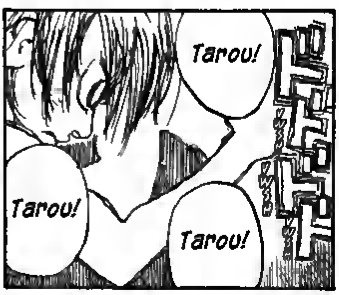

You don't even have any parents.
And you're tiny too!

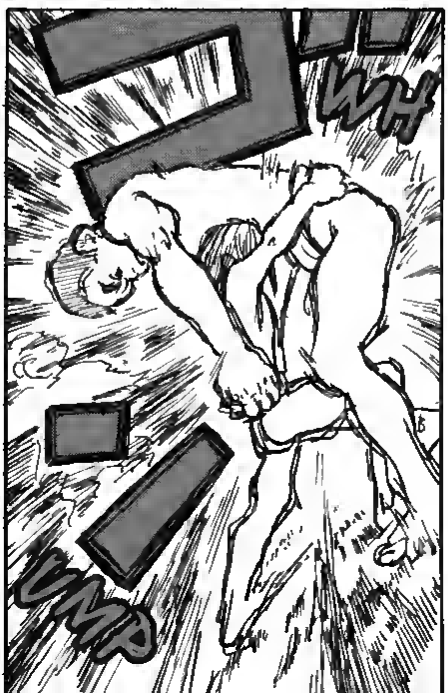
That whole bear killing thing is just a bluff.


I'll even talk to the old man about it for you.
I'm not pulling your leg. Whoever wins can be Tarou.
There's no way you can beat Tarou!


Get him, Tarou!
Mrghh.

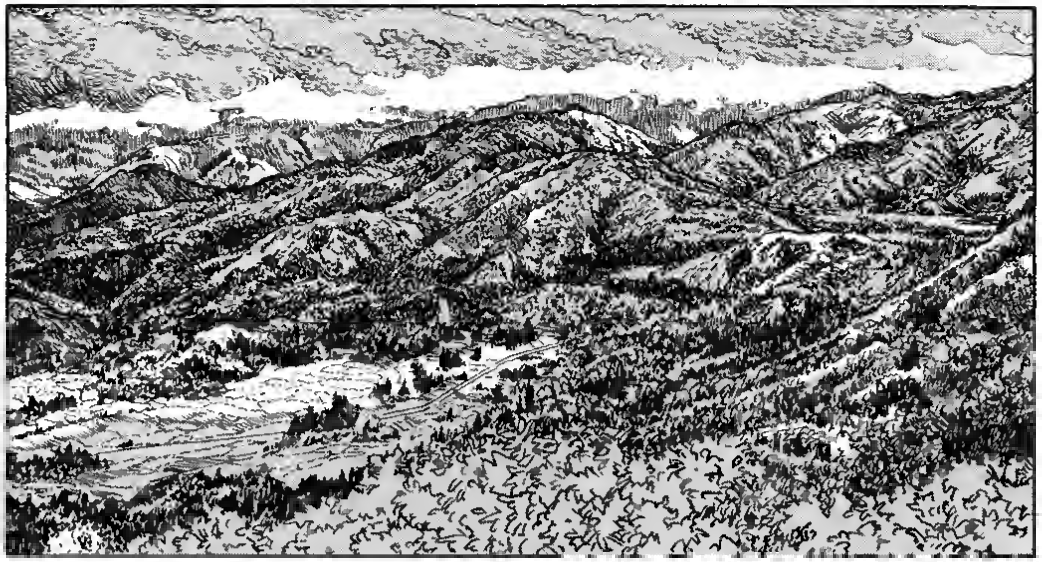
Tarou!


Tarou!
Tarou!
Tarou!

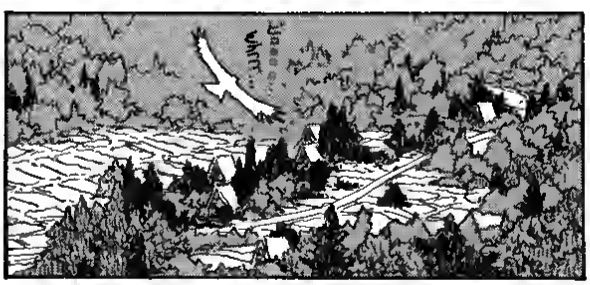


ドドド

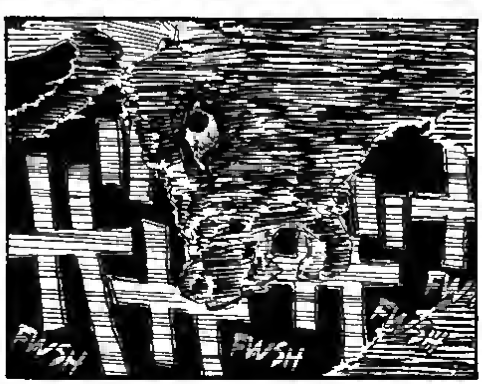
he used his divine powers to kill and survived by eating that which he killed.

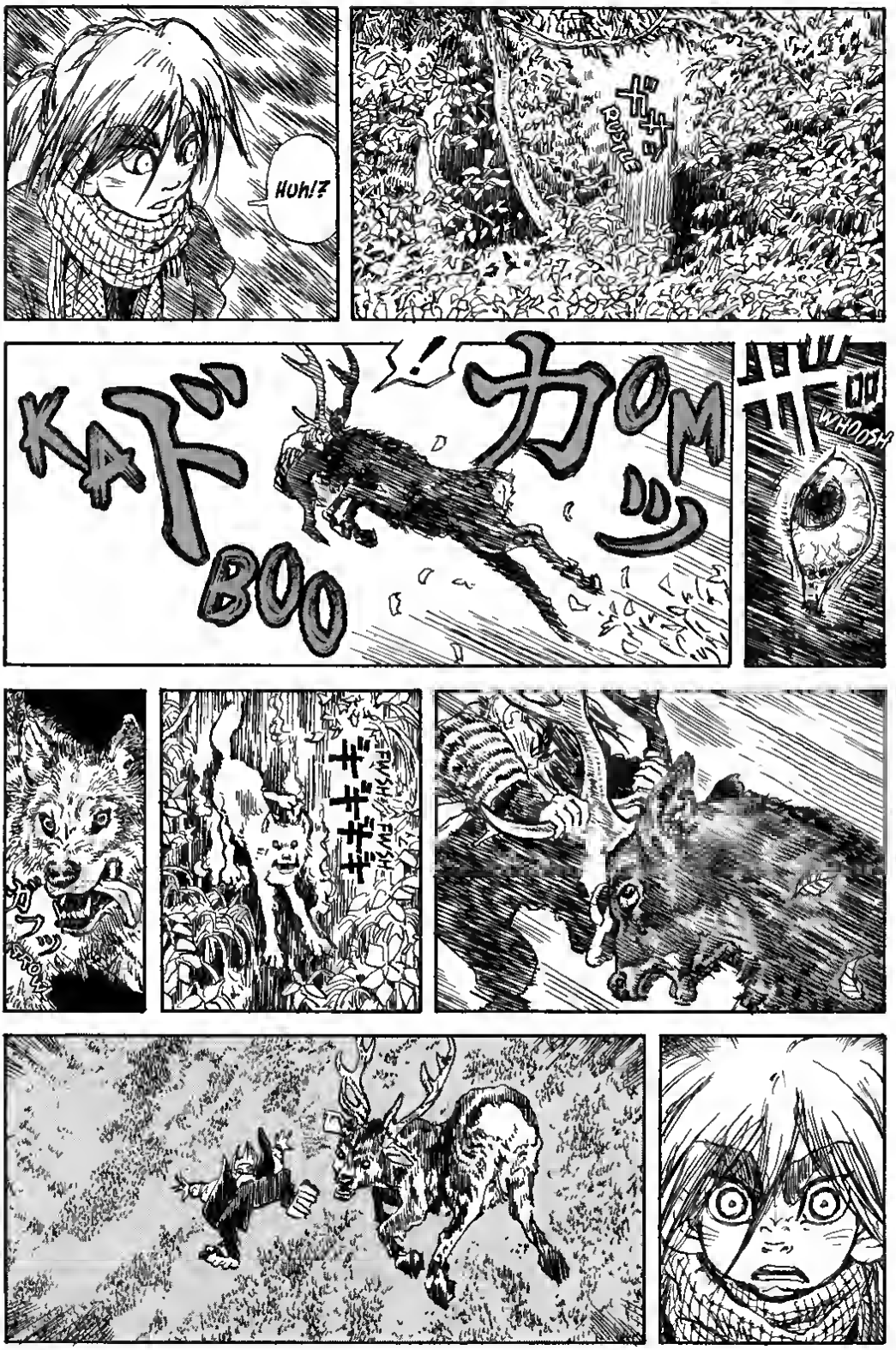


Now then,
shall I sleep in the mountains tonight or shall I go down to the village?


HUH...

HM?

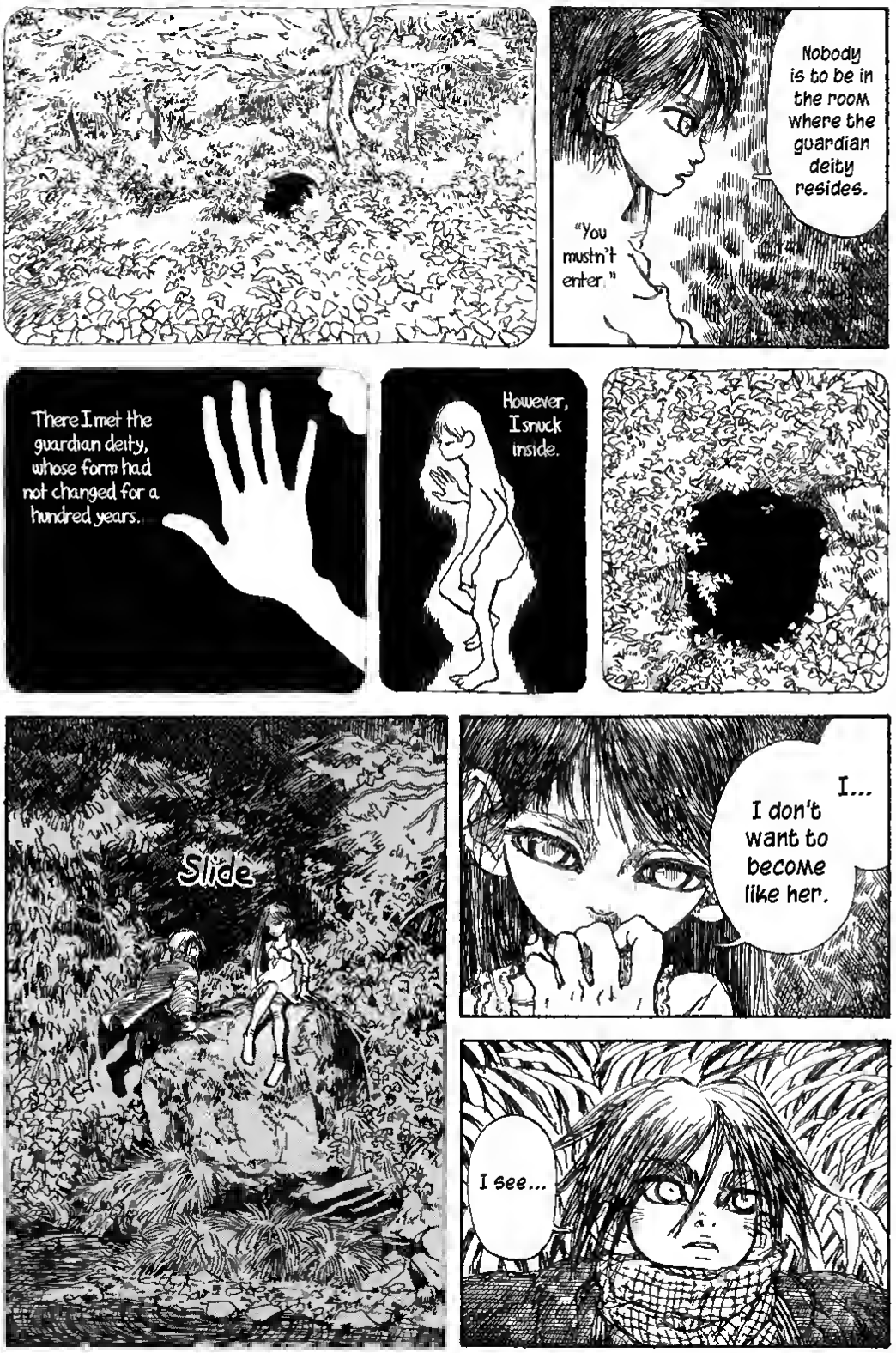

FWSH
FWSH


Huh!?
ドカッ
KA
BOO
M
WHOOSH
FWSH
FWSH
ガブッ

HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
Dead leaves...
...
RUSTLE
Ah, I'm being dragged... Who is it...?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

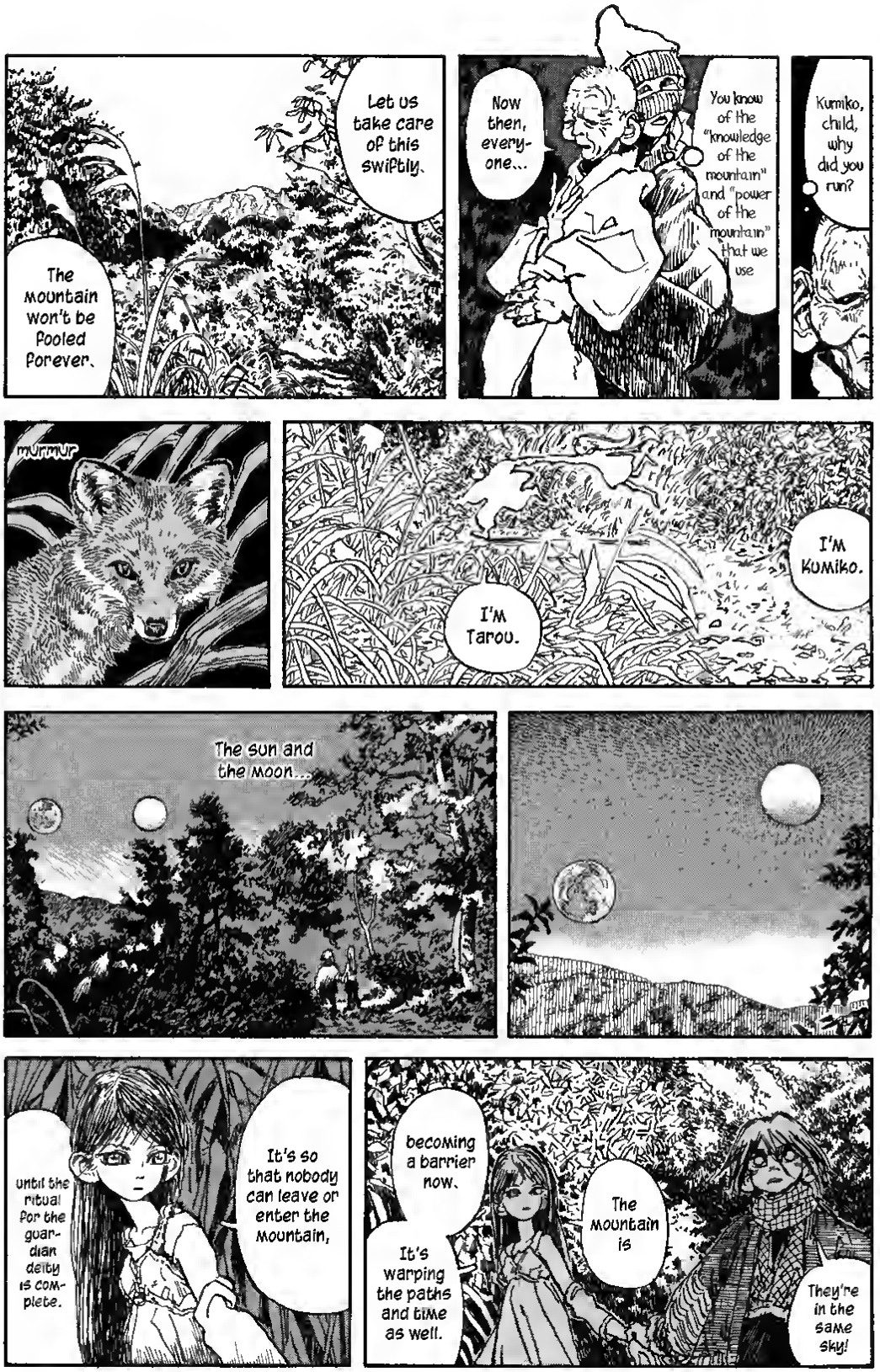
woosh
Who are you?
...
Who are you?
An illusion..?
This is a sacred place for the purification ceremony.
If we're found here, we'll be killed.

so they'll wash your body in this spring water and...
Today is a special day for the mountain.
...Oh, I see.
You're not the one who will be killed.
I am.
I will be killed today.
I'll die a single death, and then...
I'll become the guardian deity of the mountain and village.
The old ones said I would just be getting a body that won't age,
but I saw what that looks like.
I see,
so you will be killed.
I see, so you're going to become a god.

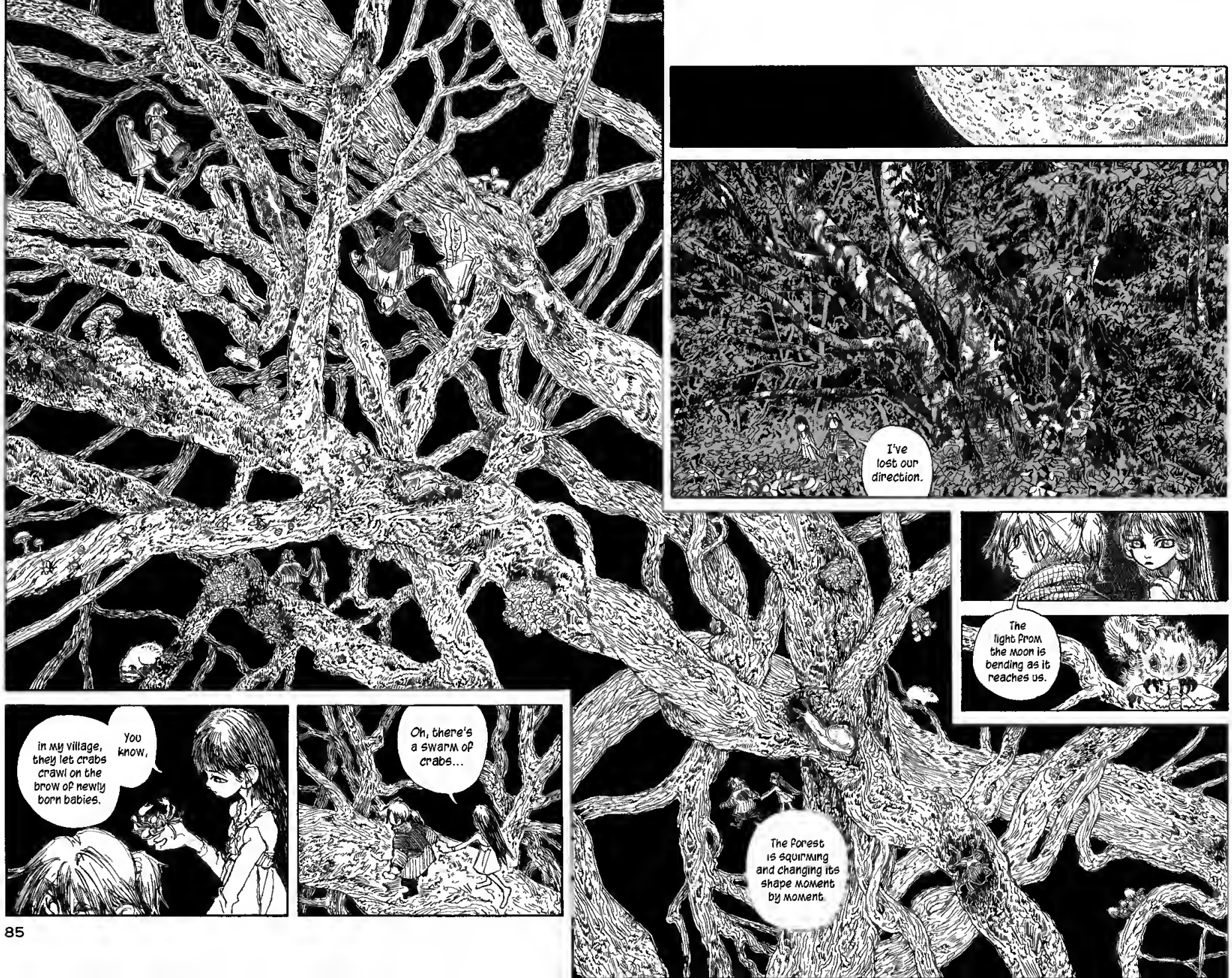

Nobody is to be in the room where the guardian deity resides.
"You mustn't enter."
There I met the guardian deity, whose form had not changed for a hundred years.
However, I snuck inside.
Slide
I... I don't want to become like her.
I see...

TWEET
Then I'll get you out of here.
But my parents, who still live, will meet a cruel fate.
But the power protecting the village will cease to be.
But...
But if we're caught, you will be killed.
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH

My divine powers aren't only good for killing.
I can use them to help people too!
flutter
...Take a good look!
How about this?
flutter
flutter
flutter
flutter
flutter
flutter
Their footprints head towards the trail the beasts walk that leads out to the silver grass fields.
It's a boy.
He appears to be of considerable strength.
Around twelve or thirteen in years.

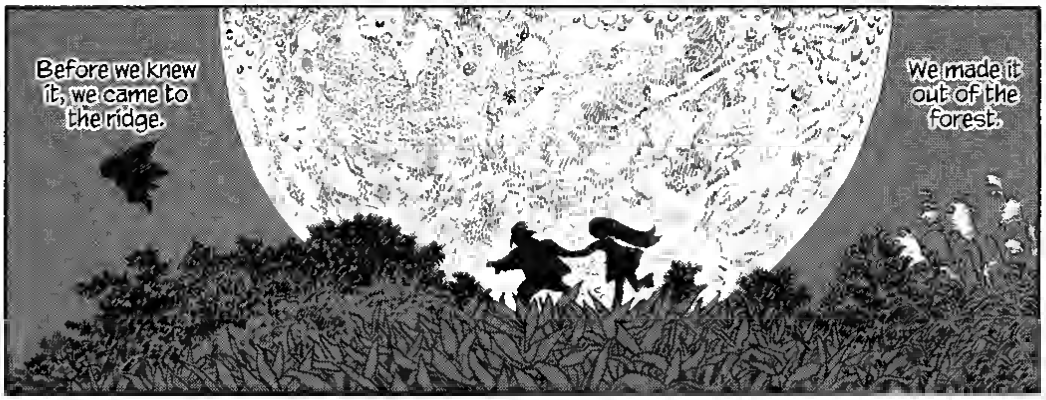

Let us take care of this swiftly.
The mountain won't be fooled forever.
Now then, everyone...
You know of the "knowledge of the mountain" and "power of the mountain" that we use
Kumiko, child, why did you run?
murmur
I'm Tarou.
I'm Kumiko.
The sun and the moon...
It's so that nobody can leave or enter the mountain,
until the ritual for the guardian deity is complete.
becoming a barrier now.
It's warping the paths and time as well.
The mountain is
They're in the same sky!

We should press on for at least a bit further.
I can sense shadows pursuing us...
Is it because I fell in? Because I didn't pass through roads to enter?
But... you were able to enter?
Let's leave these roads and try going into the forest.
Or was I brought in by that...
そめっ
FWOOSH
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH

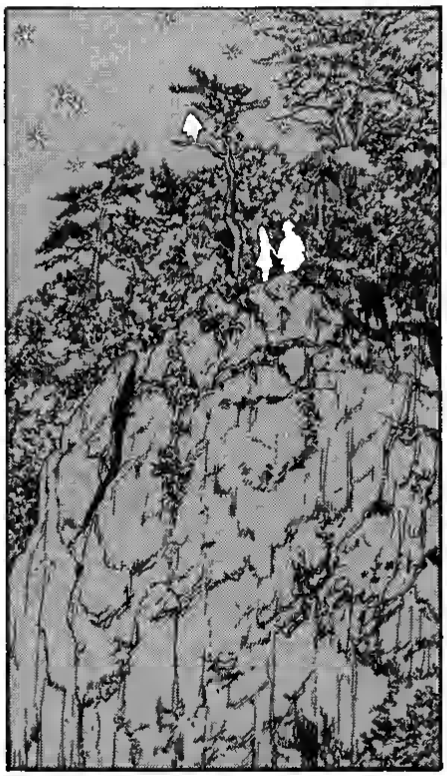

I've lost our direction.
The light from the moon is bending as it reaches us.
The forest is squirming and changing its shape moment by moment.
Oh, there's a swarm of crabs...
You know, in my village, they let crabs crawl on the brow of newly born babies.

because children who are slow to develop are chosen to become the guardian deity.
It's a charm,
so they'll begin to crawl quickly,
...Maybe my birth parents
didn't let the crabs crawl on me.
The old ones found me and raised me as a child who would become a guardian deity.
I developed too slowly, and because of that,
I was abandoned to the mountain for a time.
cuttle
cuttle
mutters...

tap
tap
That's...
tap
Is it telling me to come along?
?
Let's try following it.
If that's what called me here, then

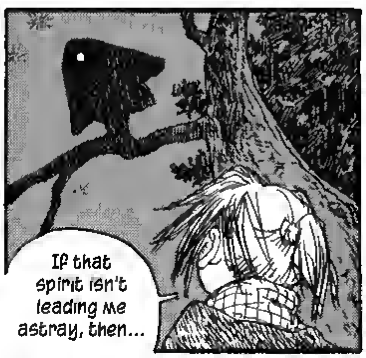

Before we knew it, we came to the ridge.
We made it out of the forest.

Down there is what is called "the abyss of the abandoned gods."



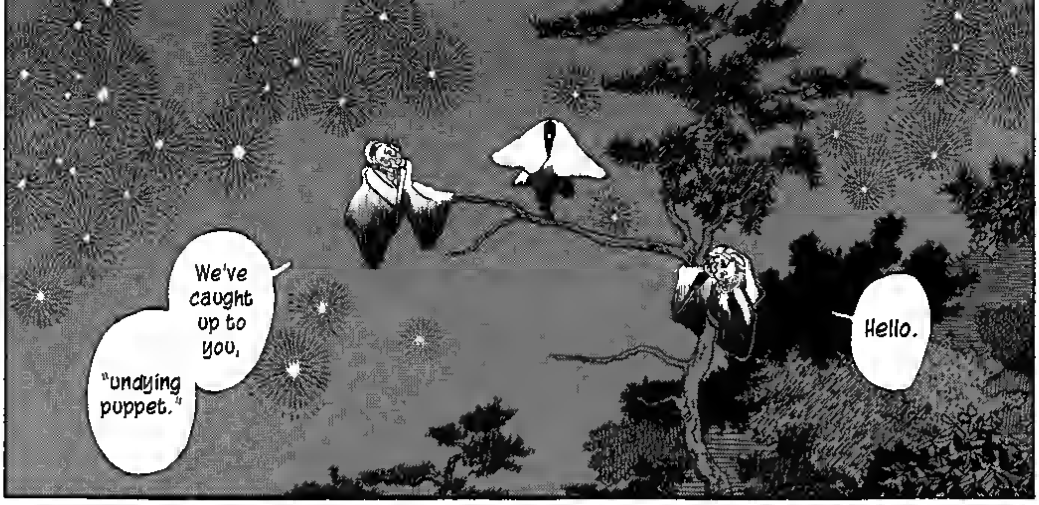
They say it's so deep that even the gods can't climb up out of it.

?


If that spirit isn't leading me astray, then...

Perhaps the river is now a pathway to get through the barrier.

RUSTLE

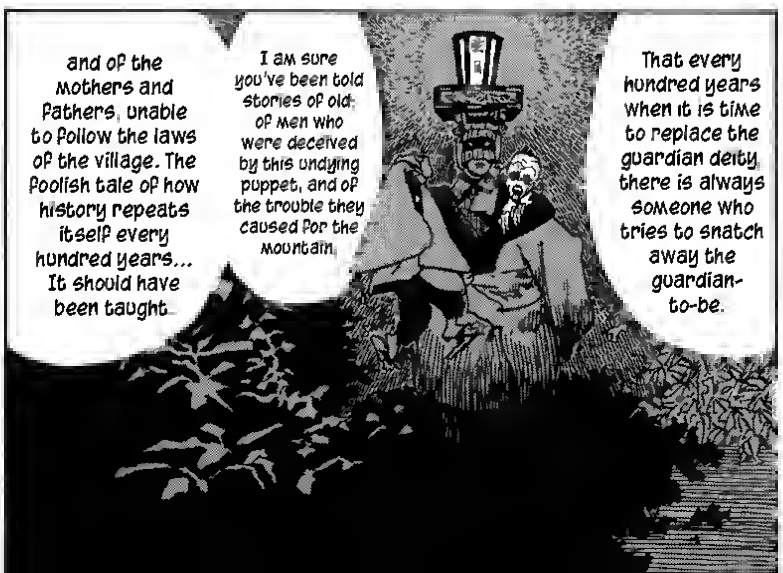

We've caught up to you, "undying puppet."
Hello.

smack

We've caught up to you.
!
We've caught up to you.
We've caught up to you

did you really think that you could outwit us?
when we created you,
Are the eyes planted in you aching?
we intended for you to be quite clever, but...

GRAB
O puppet,


and of the mothers and fathers, unable to follow the laws of the village. The foolish tale of how history repeats itself every hundred years... It should have been taught
I am sure you've been told stories of old; of men who were deceived by this undying puppet, and of the trouble they caused for the mountain.
That every hundred years when it is time to replace the guardian deity, there is always someone who tries to snatch away the guardian-to-be.

You have heard this before, haven't you, Kumiko?
The old ones...

This barrier has not been erected for our fun and games.
It is so we may mislead the mountain and keep it unaware that we are replacing the guardian deity. So, Kumiko, child...
will you not come with us quietly...?
BWOOOOM
STOMP
HOWLLL

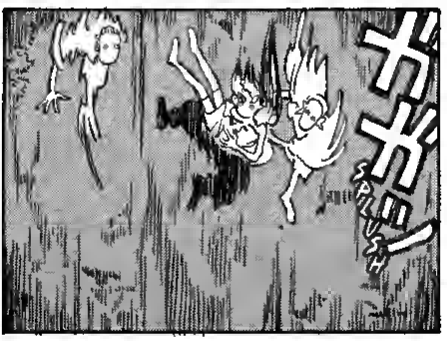
We'll ride the river and go downstream..
ズゴッ
ROAR
ゴオッ
!
Splash
ガガッ
splash
splash
splash
ガ
Splash

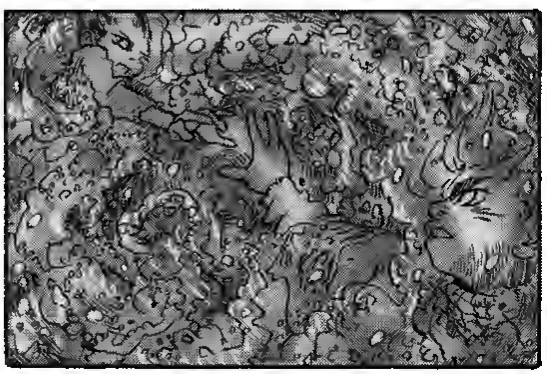
Do not underestimate us as your opponents!

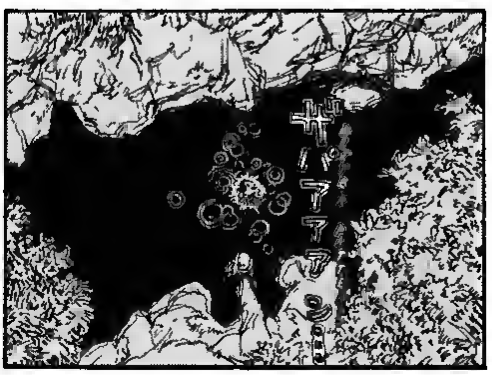
What strength! You must be the murderer Tarou, the bear killer, that the wind brought word of.
ガッガッ
ガッガッ

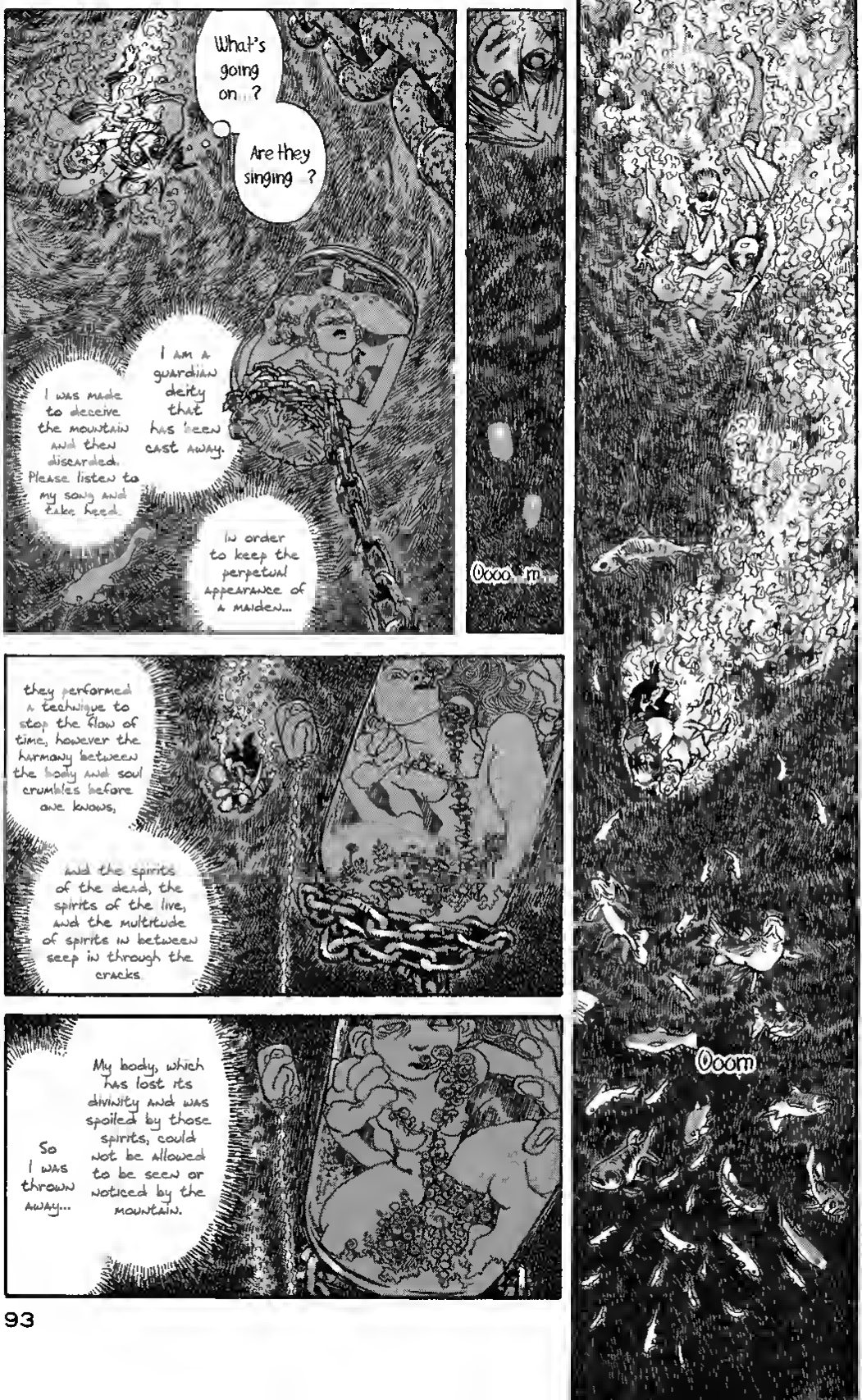
You'll make up for that overconfidence with your life!
Do you really think you are any match for us with the mere amount of divine power you were born with?

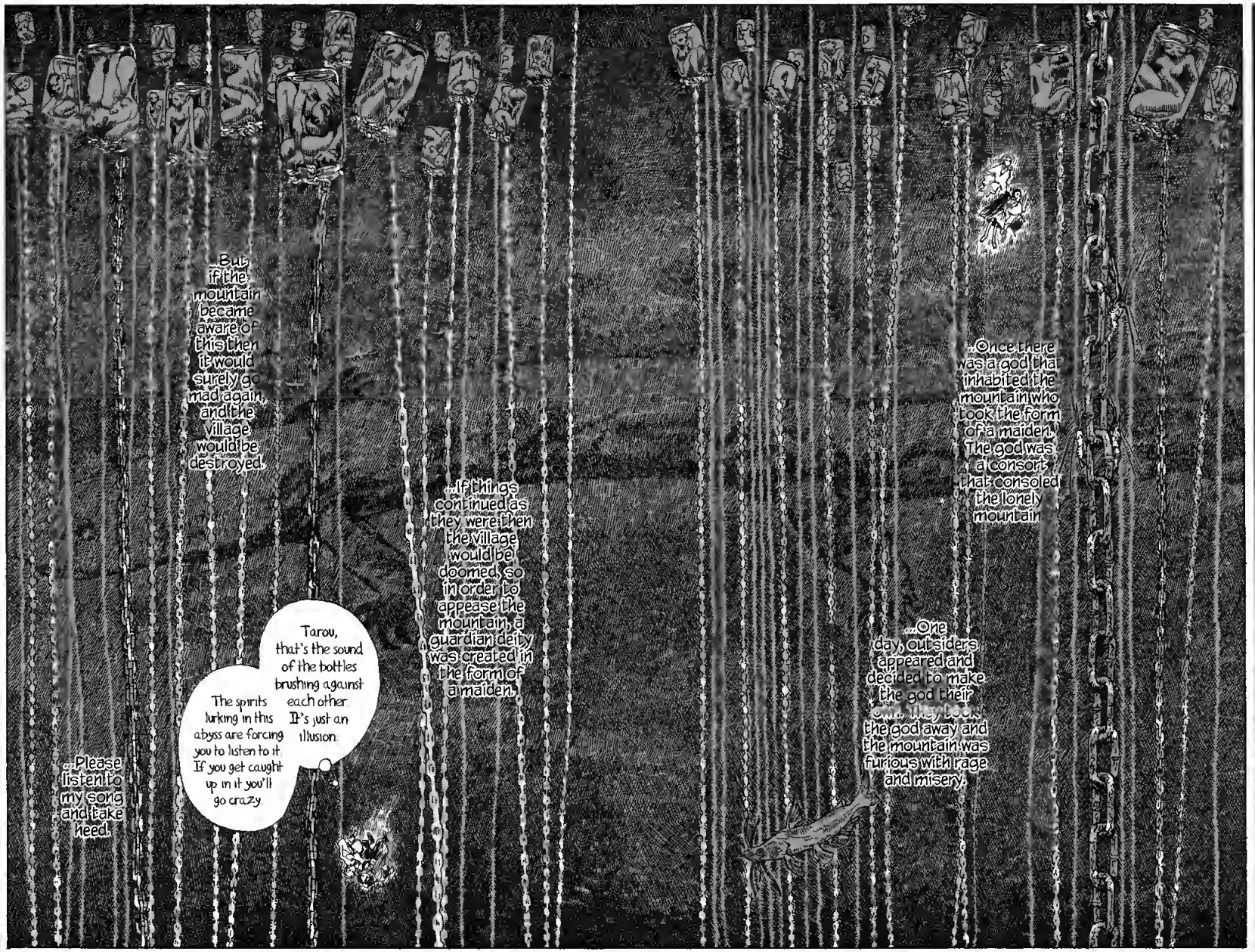
ド
ASH
SPL


ガガッ

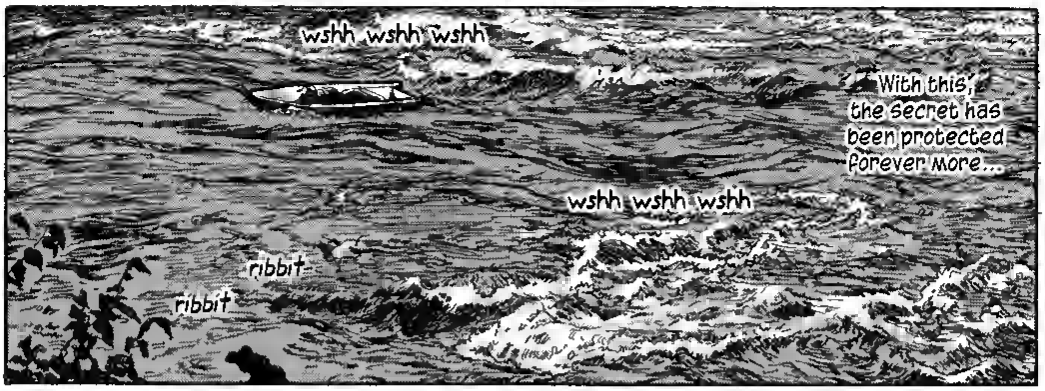



ーアアア

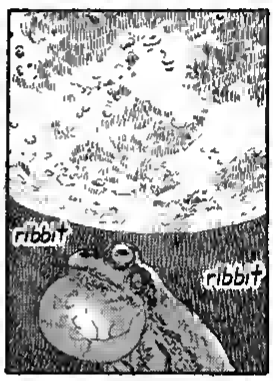

What's going on...?
Are they singing...?
I am a guardian deity that has been cast away.
I was made to deceive the mountain and then discarded. Please listen to my song and take heed.
In order to keep the perpetual appearance of a maiden...
Oooo...m
they performed a technique to stop the flow of time, however the harmony between the body and soul crumbles before one knows,
and the spirits of the dead, the spirits of the live, and the multitude of spirits in between seep in through the cracks.
My body, which has lost its divinity and was spoiled by those spirits, could not be allowed to be seen or noticed by the mountain.
So I was thrown away...
Ooom

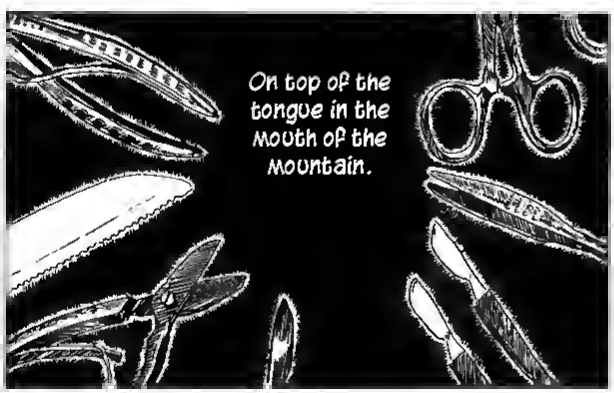

Kumiko must become the guardian deity.
We must continue to pool the mountain.
...Once there was a god that inhabited the mountain who took the form of a maiden. The god was a consort that consoled the lonely mountain.
...One day, outsiders appeared and decided to make the god their [illegible]. They took the god away and the mountain was furious with rage and misery.
...If things continued as they were then the village would be doomed, so in order to appease the mountain, a guardian deity was created in the form of a maiden.
But if the mountain became aware of this then it would surely go mad again, and the village would be destroyed.
Tarou, that's the sound of the bottles brushing against each other. It's just an illusion.
The spirits lurking in this abyss are forcing you to listen to it. If you get caught up in it you'll go crazy.
...Please listen to my song and take heed.

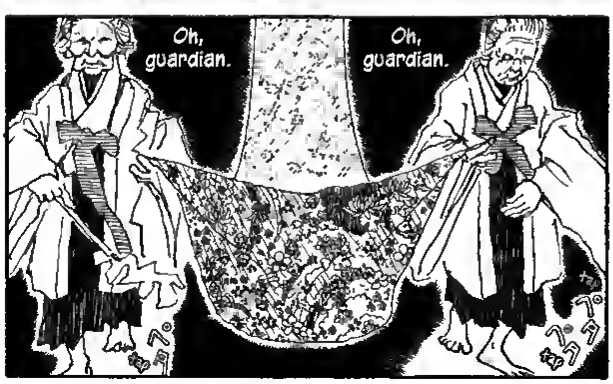
First, we will take the memory of the guardian deity and the memory of the mountain.
and bind them to the left eye.
We will not keep complete control if the secret is brought out of the mountain. It must not leave.
This will seal the memories.
And transplant it into the undying puppet, the vessel of secrets.
We'll pluck it out...
...
Now return to the forest.
Do not get in our way again!
What must not be known will dwell inside it forever.
By the time his wound closes, he won't even know that he has lost his memory. He'll be carried out on the river and that will be the end of it.
Even if Tarou becomes a spirit of the dead, he will not be able to bring the secret out with him.
ザ
WSHH
ザ
WSHH


wshh wshh wshh
With this, the secret has been protected forever more...
wshh wshh wshh
ribbit
ribbit

ribbit
ribbit
ribbit

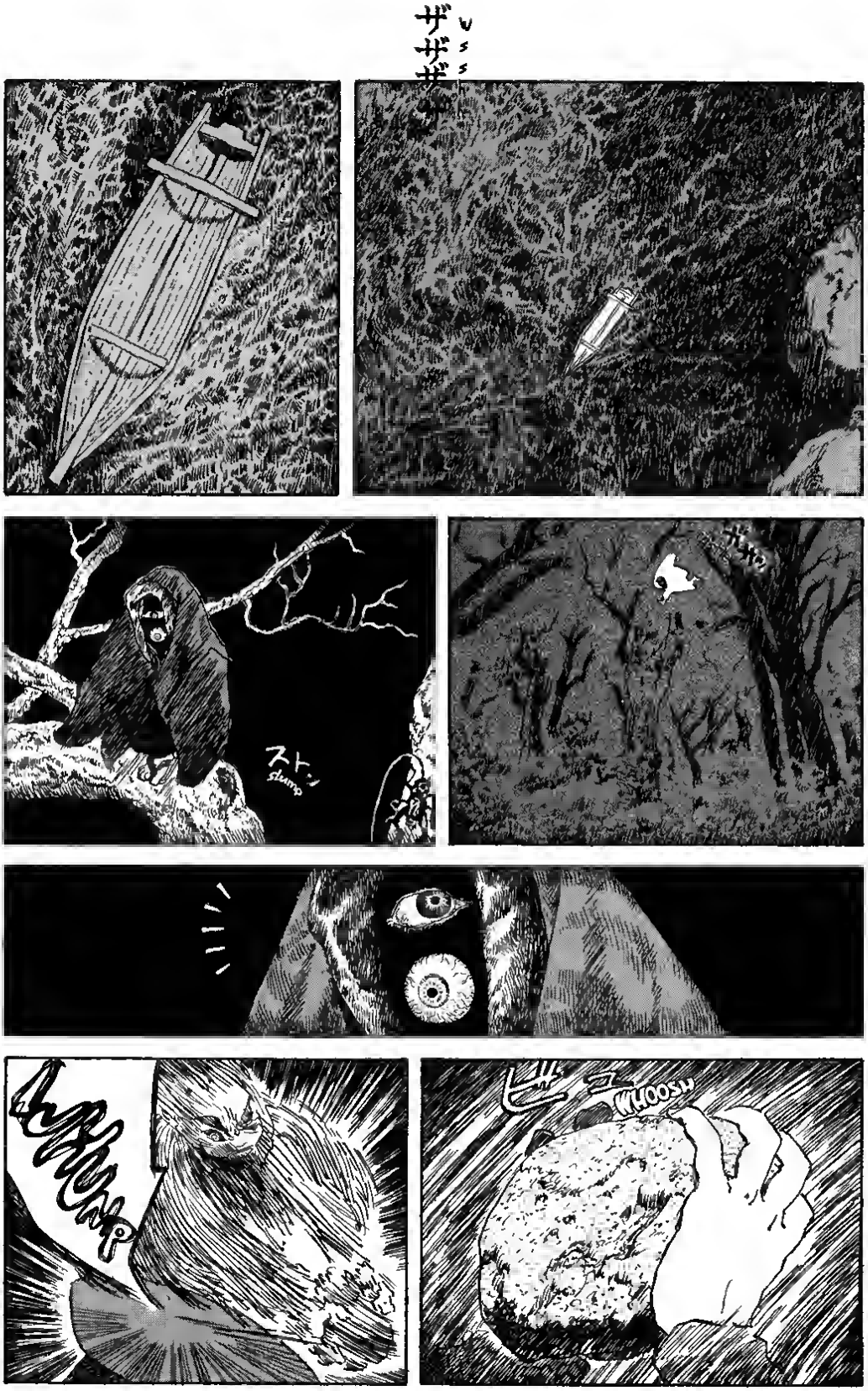

ribbit
ribbit

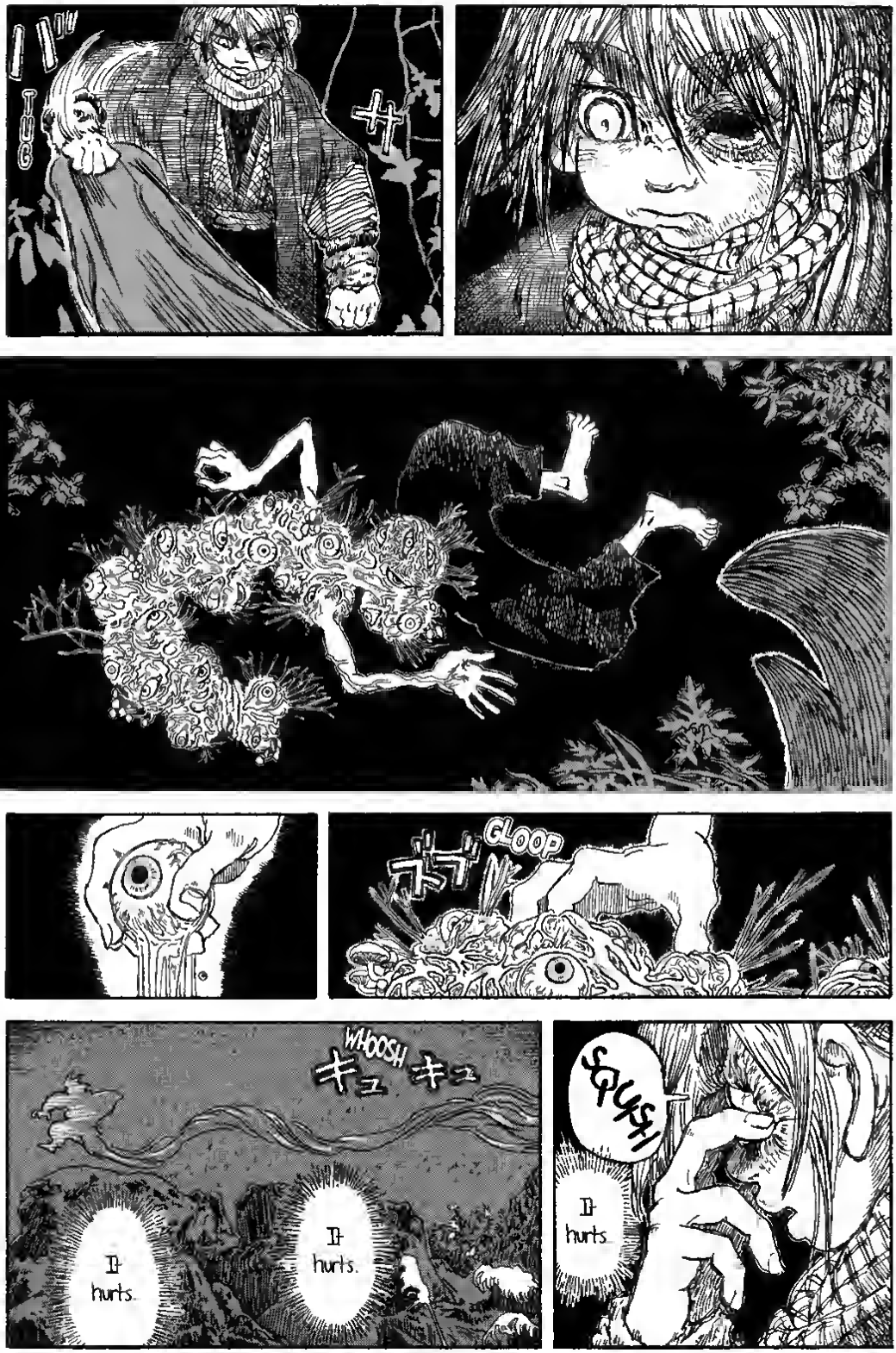

On top of the tongue in the mouth of the mountain.


Oh, guardian.
Oh, guardian.

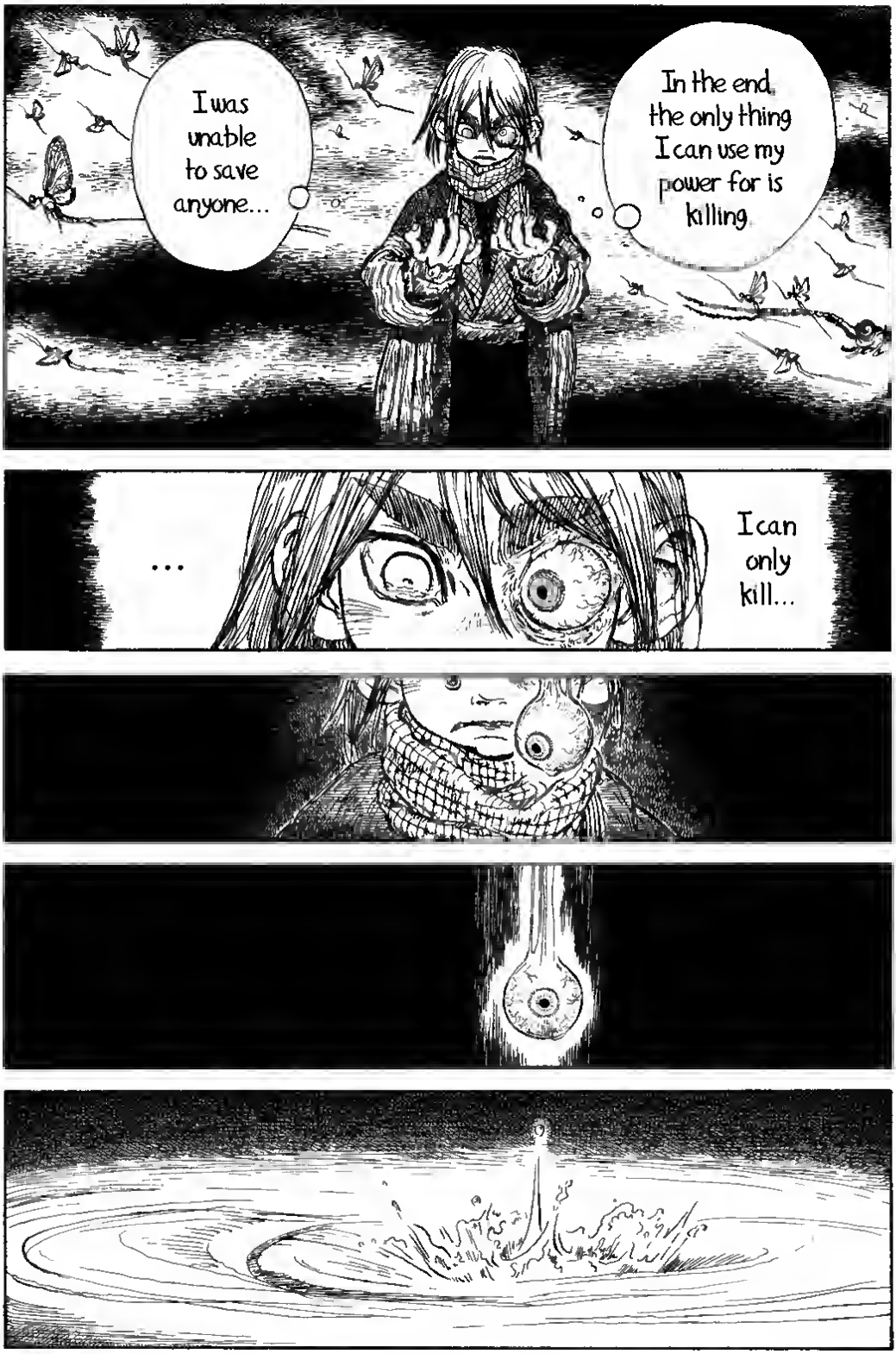
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit

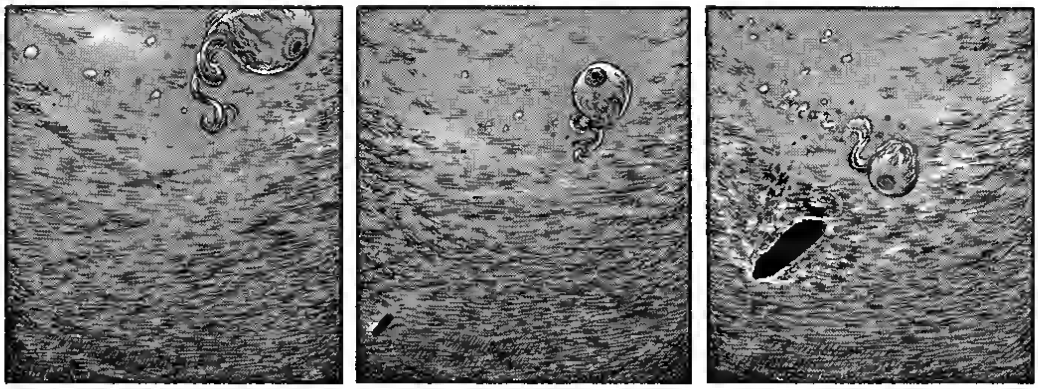
Let us put some makeup on you.
Let us dress you up in some pretty clothes.
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit
ribbit
May you continue to deceive the mountain for a hundred years...


ザザザ
ストン
slump
WHOOSH


TUG
GLOOP
WHOOSH
It hurts.
It hurts.
SQUISH
It hurts.

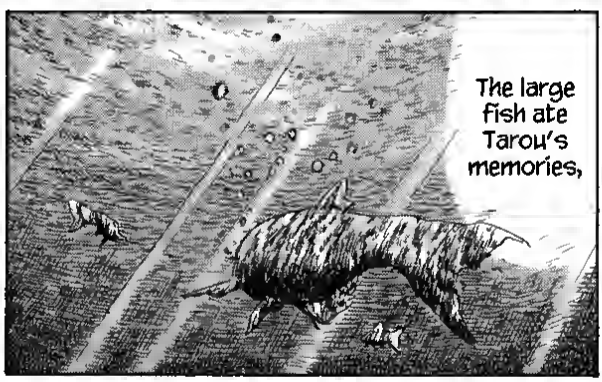
Dammit!
SPLASH
Dammit!
It hurts.
ひよう
Dammit!
DAMN IT ALL!
I'll have my revenge! I'll kill you!
I'll be back as soon as my wounds heal!
Ahhh
It's no good
Ah
I'll kill you all...
I'll kill you!


I was unable to save anyone...
In the end, the only thing I can use my power for is killing
...
I can only kill...

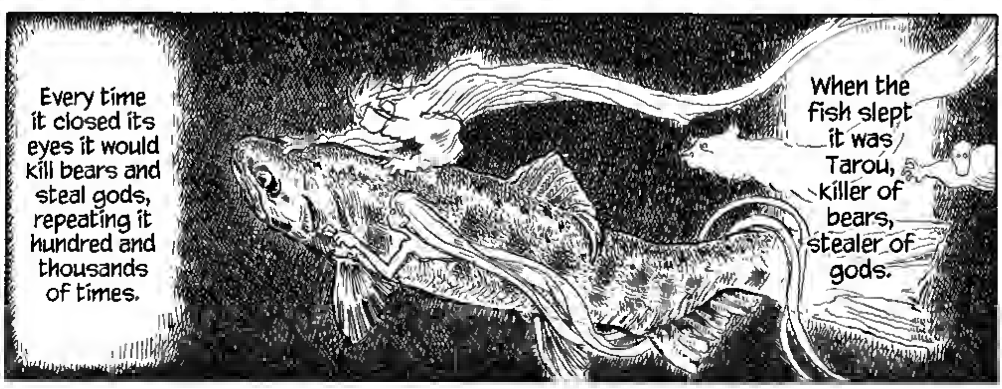


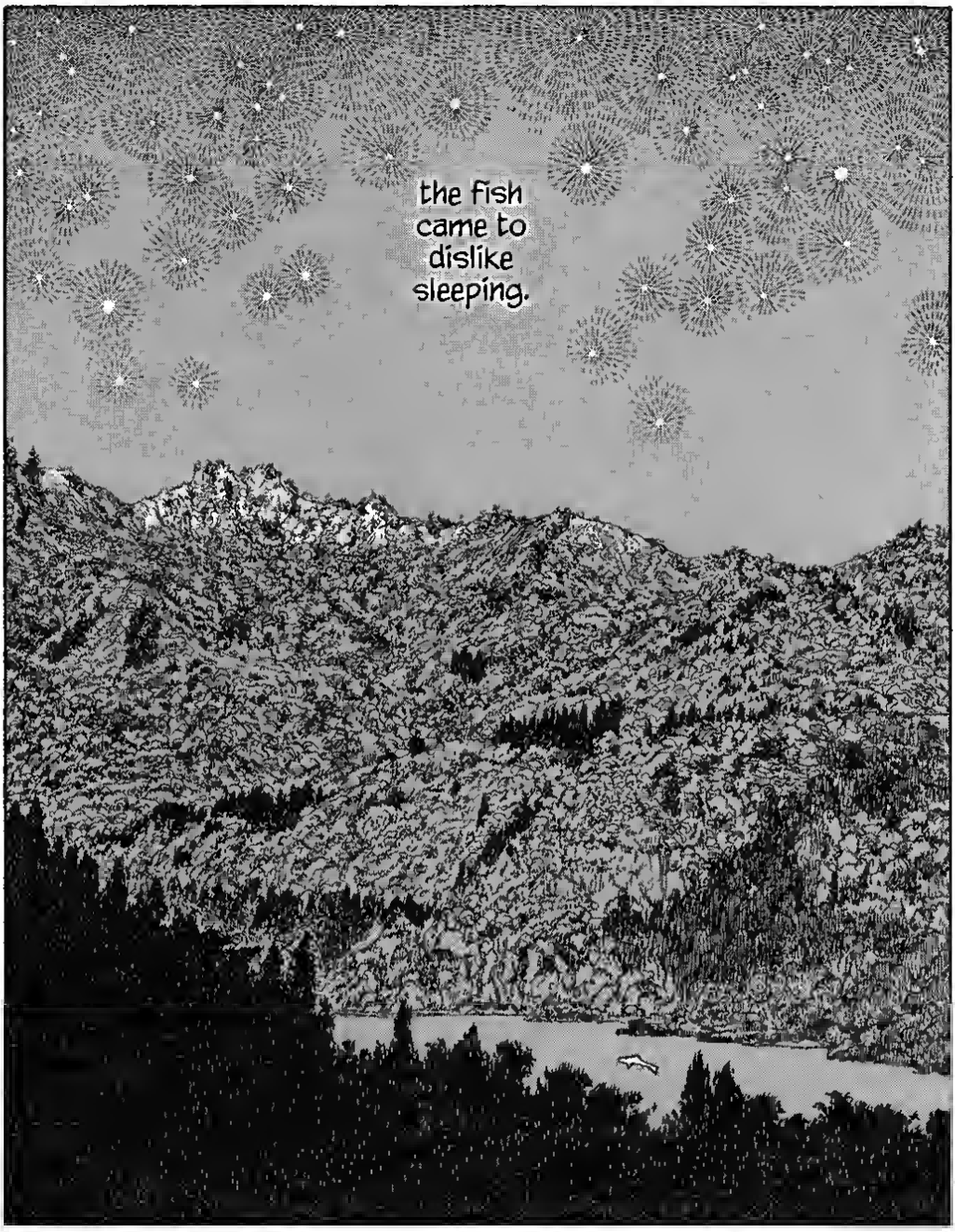
And so...

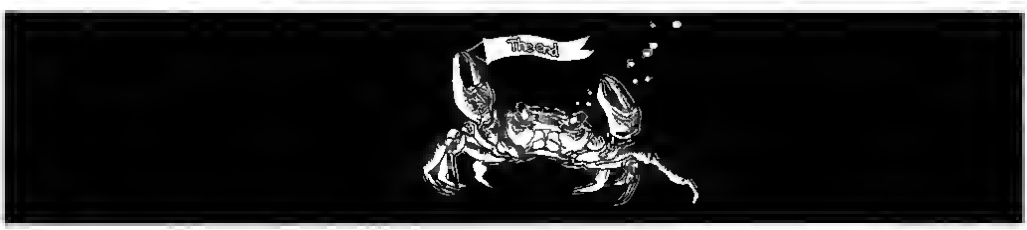
and began to have the same dreams ever since.


The large fish ate Tarou's memories,

Eventually...


Every time it closed its eyes it would kill bears and steal gods, repeating it hundred and thousands of times.
When the fish slept it was Tarou, killer of bears, stealer of gods.


the fish
came to
dislike
sleeping.


Tired

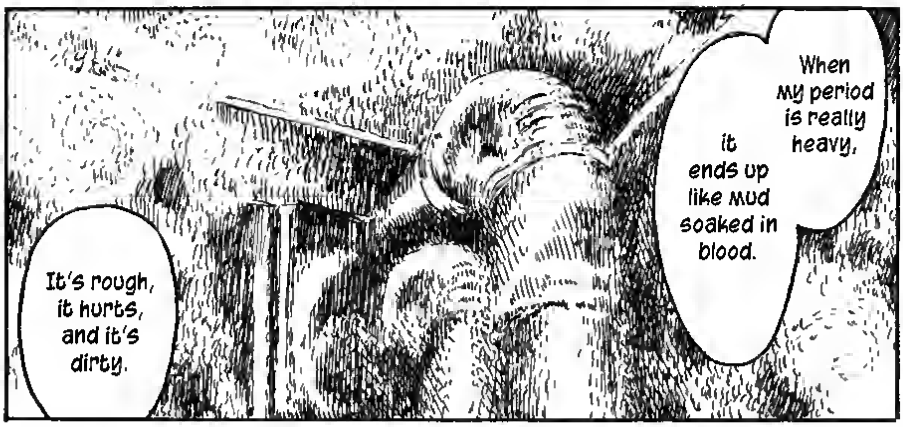
End

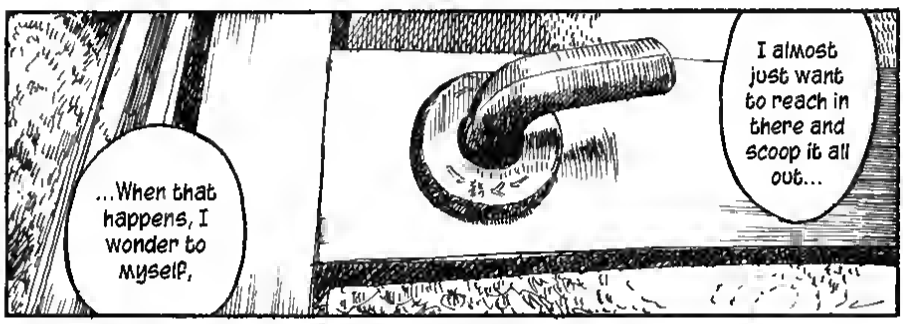
The Tears of Tarou, Killer of Bears, Stealer of Gods
Originally published in Afternoon 1999 June Issue

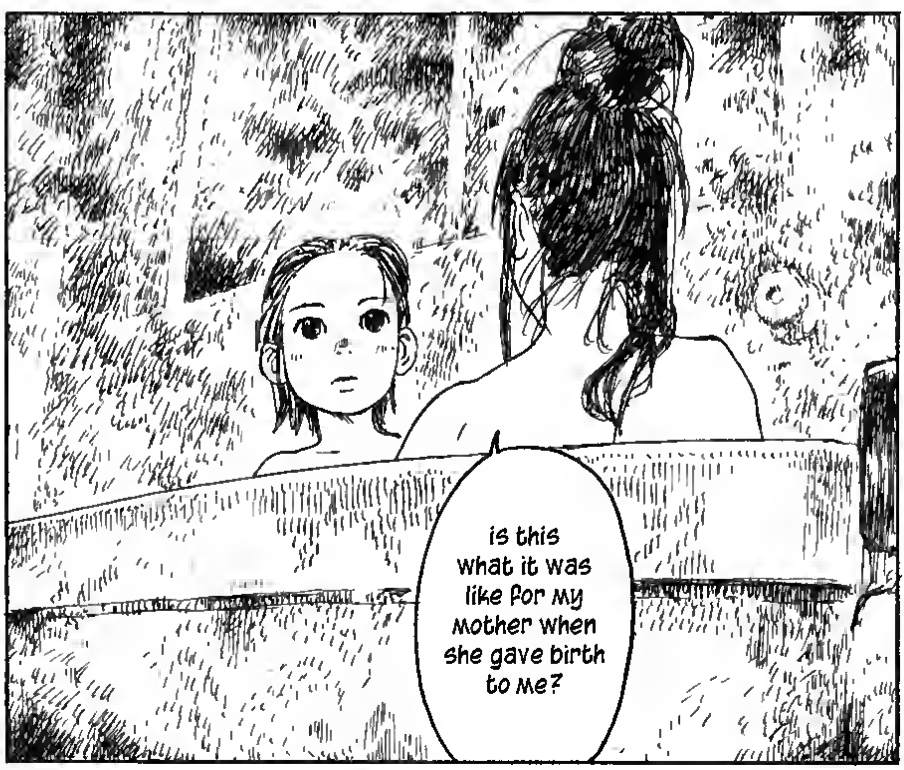
Covered in Sand

www.illuminati-manga.com
#illuminati-manga@irc.irchighway.net

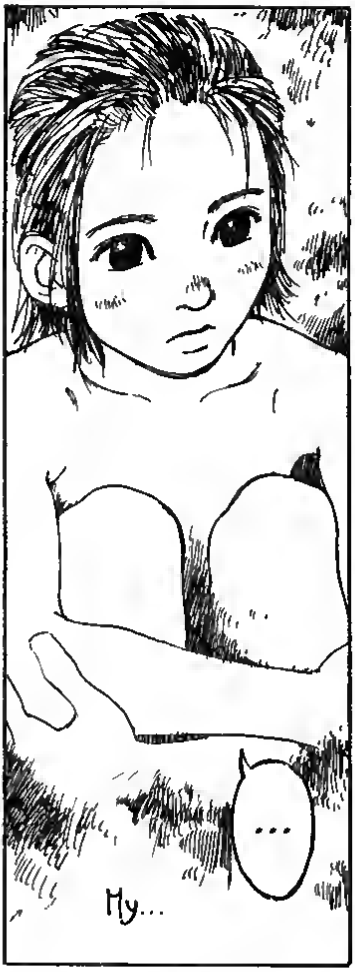
Covered
in Sand
Kamasawa
Hitomi

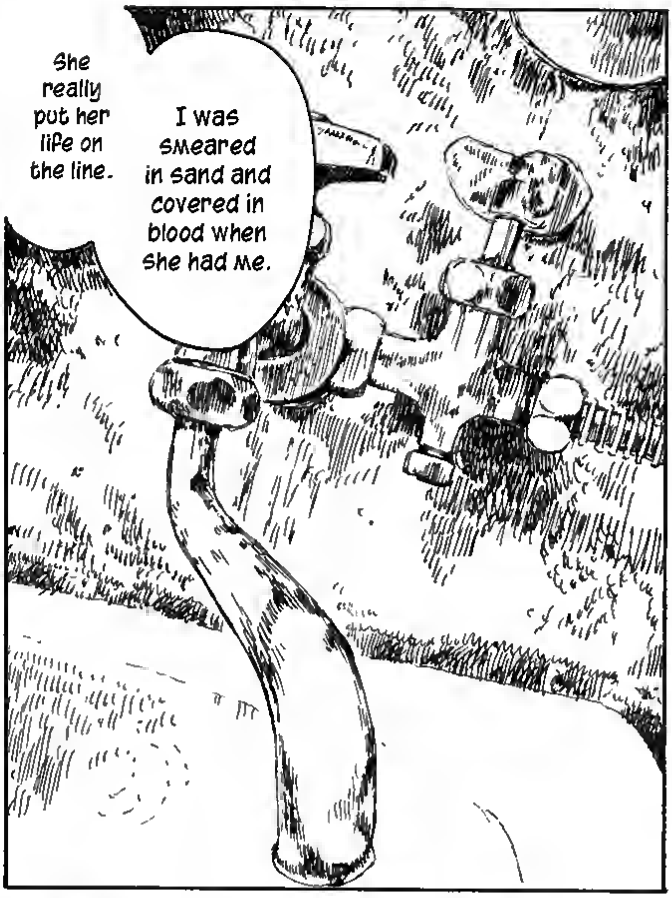


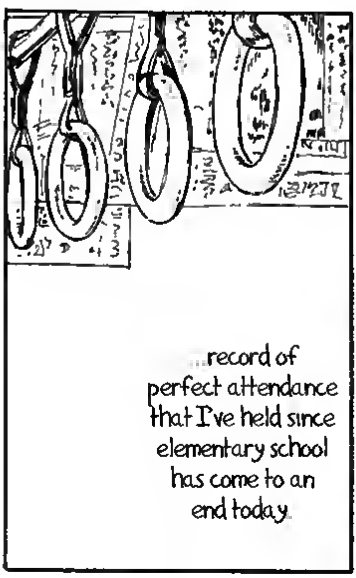


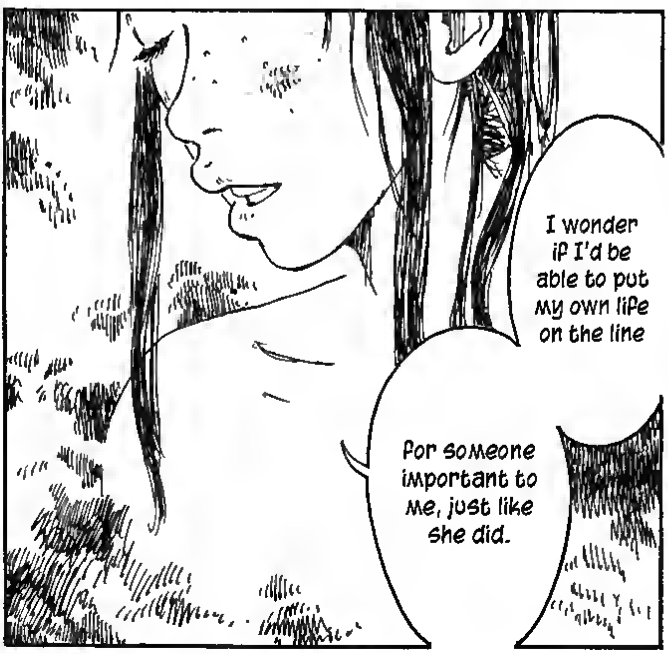


This is what Tamako-san told me while we were in the bath.


...
My...

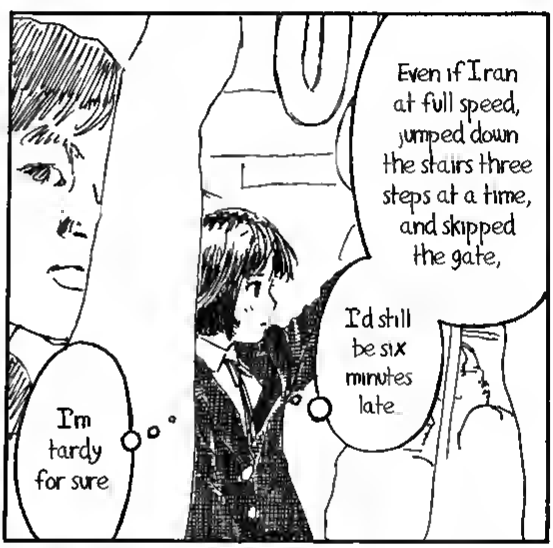

She really put her life on the line.
I was smeared in sand and covered in blood when she had me.

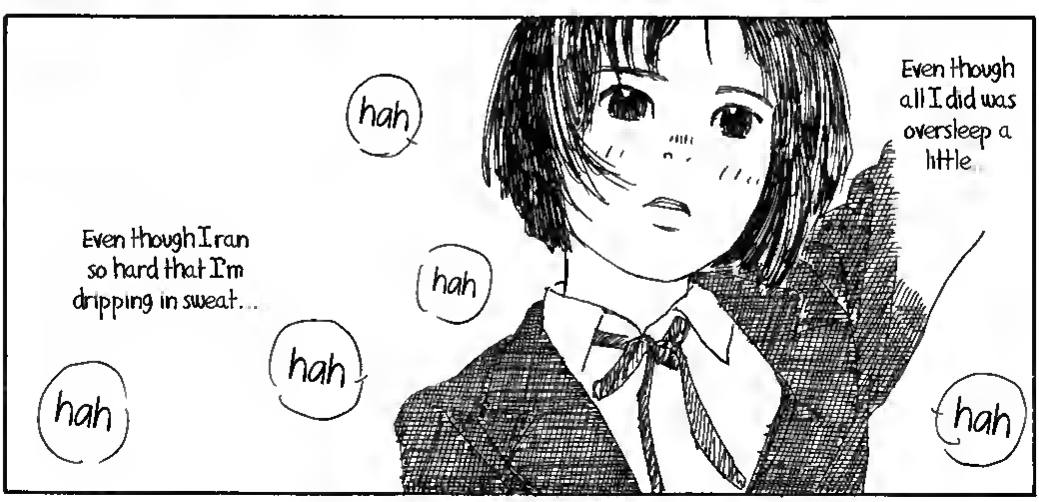

...record of perfect attendance that I've held since elementary school has come to an end today.

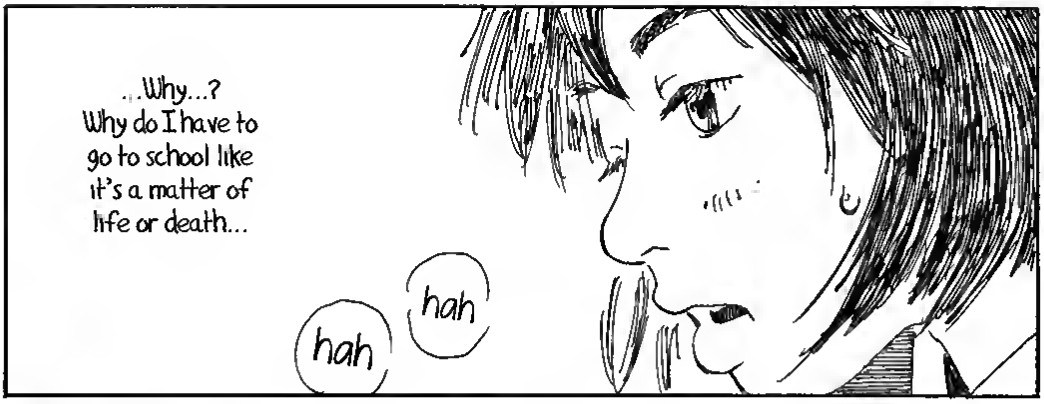

I wonder if I'd be able to put my own life on the line
For someone important to me, just like she did.

It's no use...

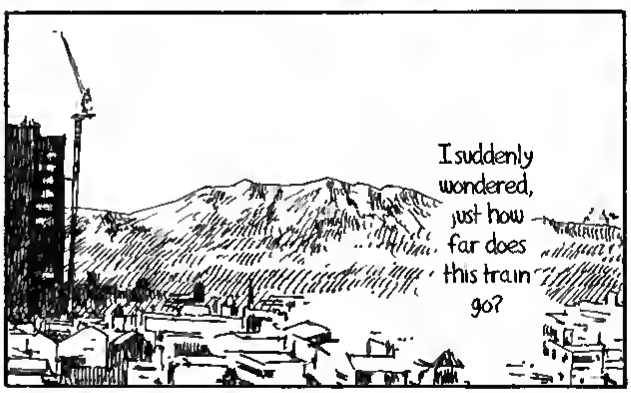
My mother and father will use this as something to fight over again

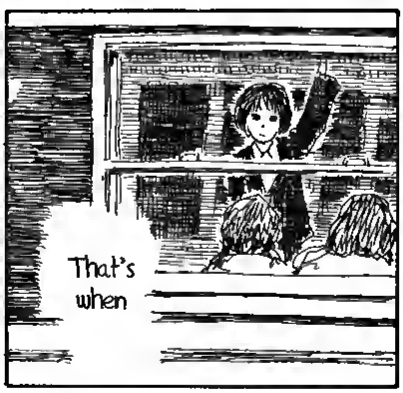

Even if I ran at full speed, jumped down the stairs three steps at a time, and skipped the gate,
I'd still be six minutes late...
I'm tardy for sure

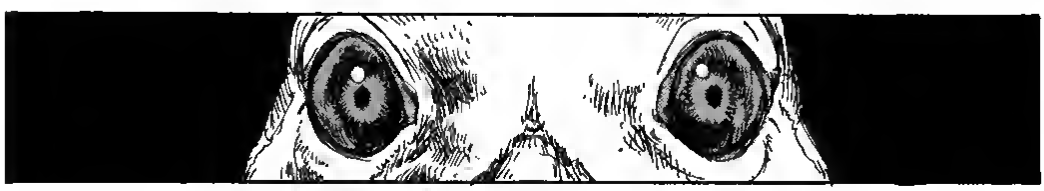

Even though all I did was oversleep a little...
hah
hah
hah
hah
Even though I ran so hard that I'm dripping in sweat...

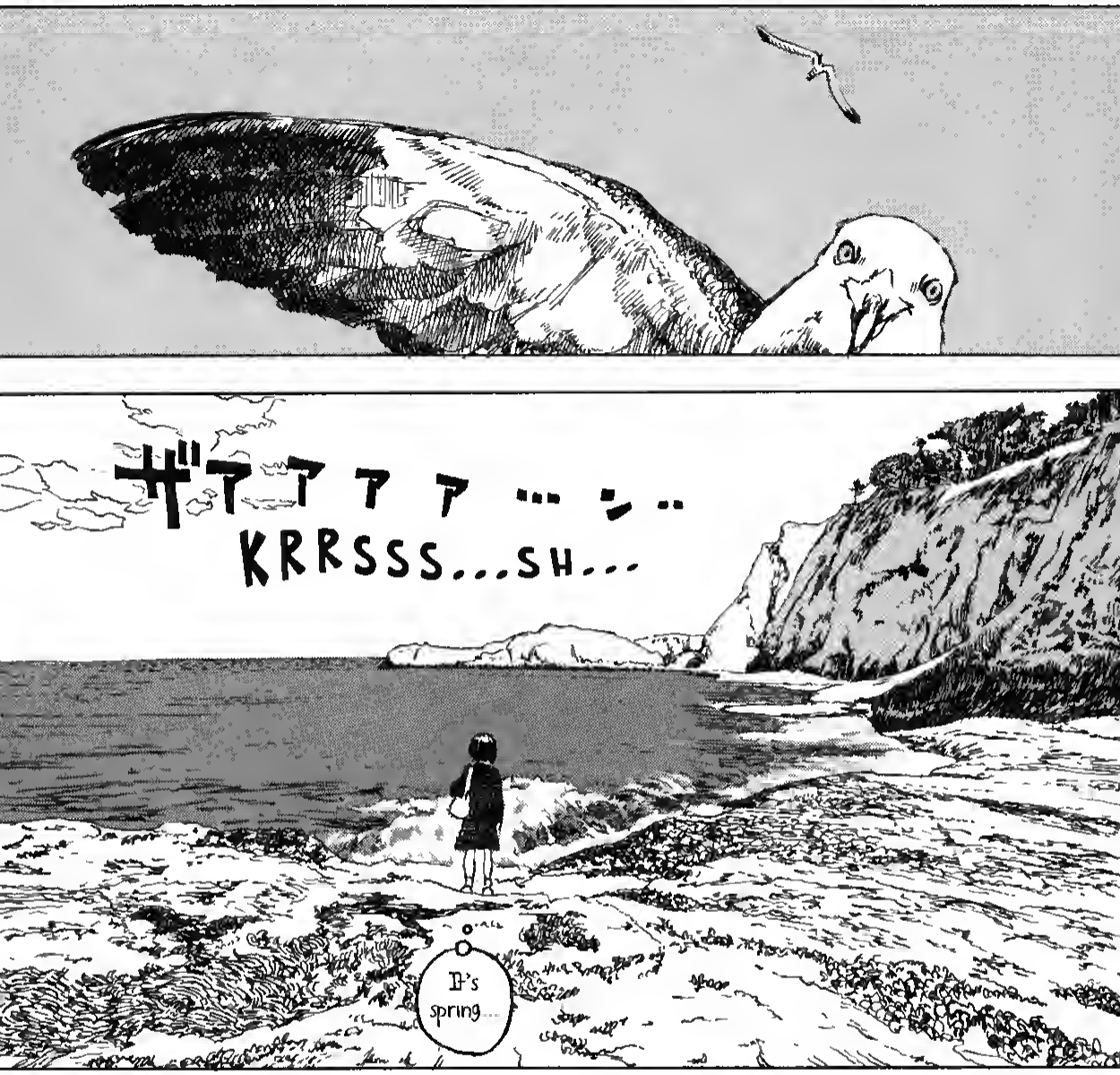

...Why...?
Why do I have to go to school like it's a matter of life or death...
hah
hah

ゴト ゴト ゴト ゴト...


I suddenly wondered, just how far does this train go?

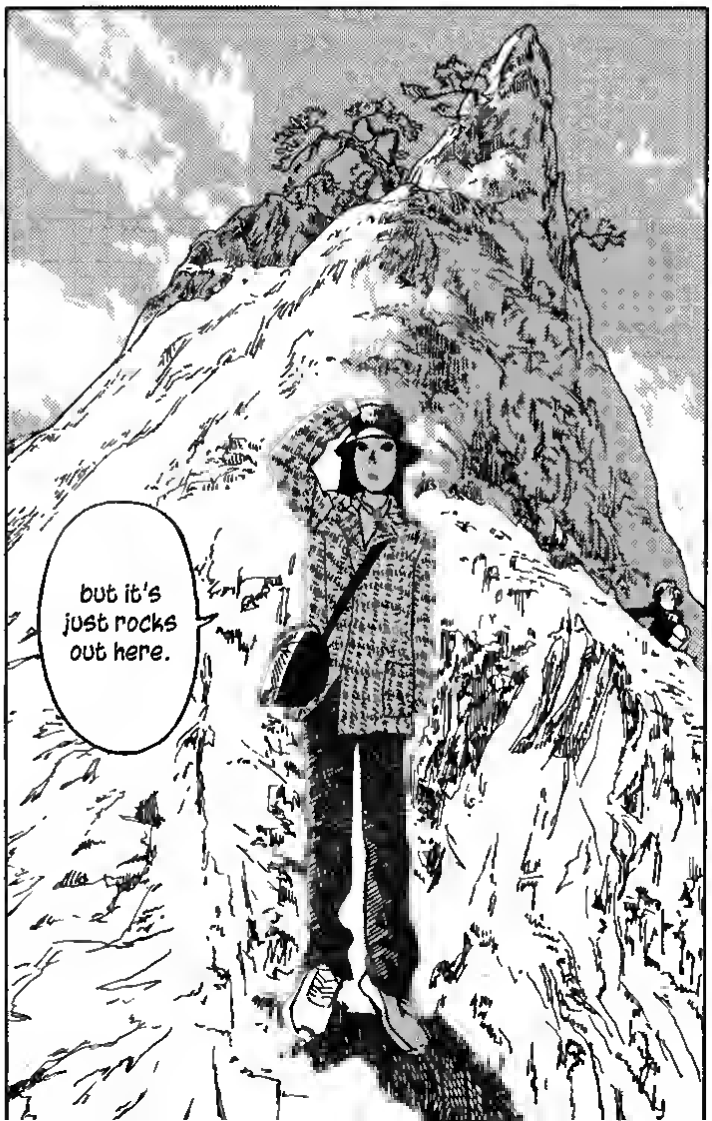

That's when




ザアアアアーン…
KRRSSS...SH...
It's spring...

on these coasts already...

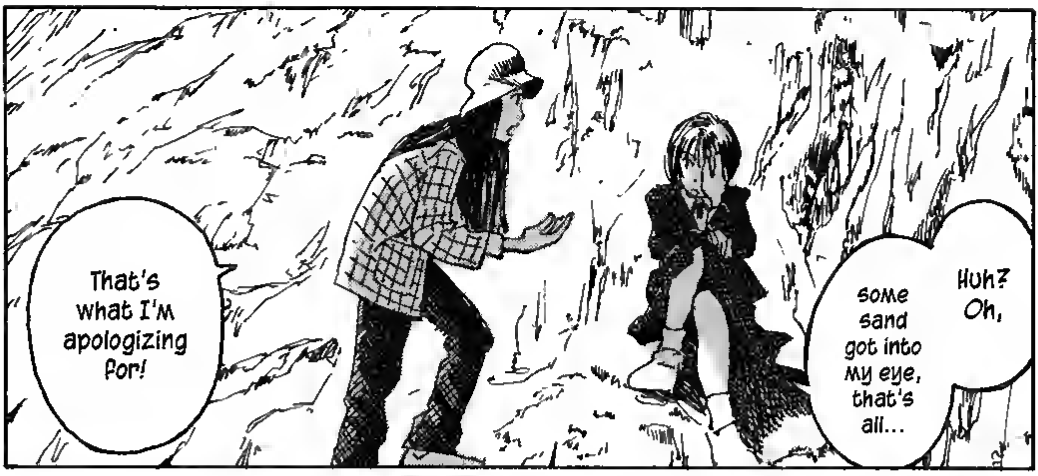
サアア…

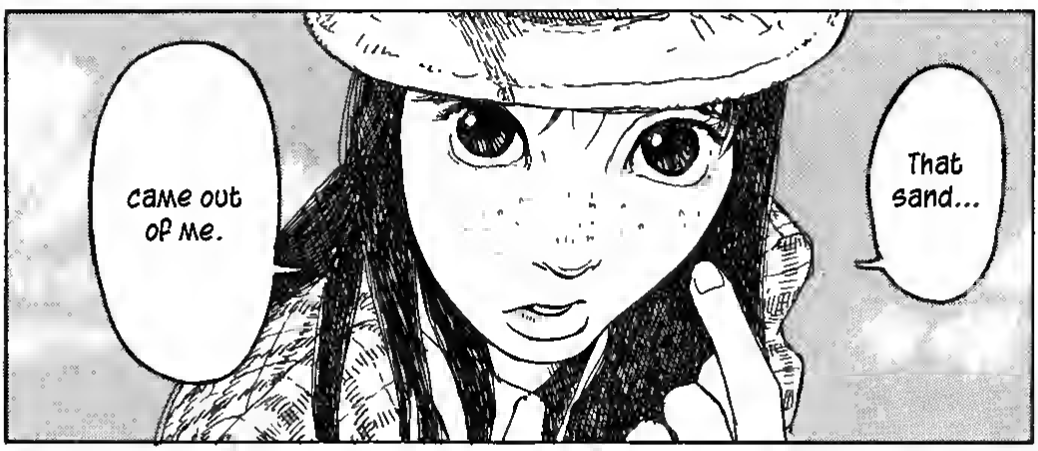

but it's just rocks out here.

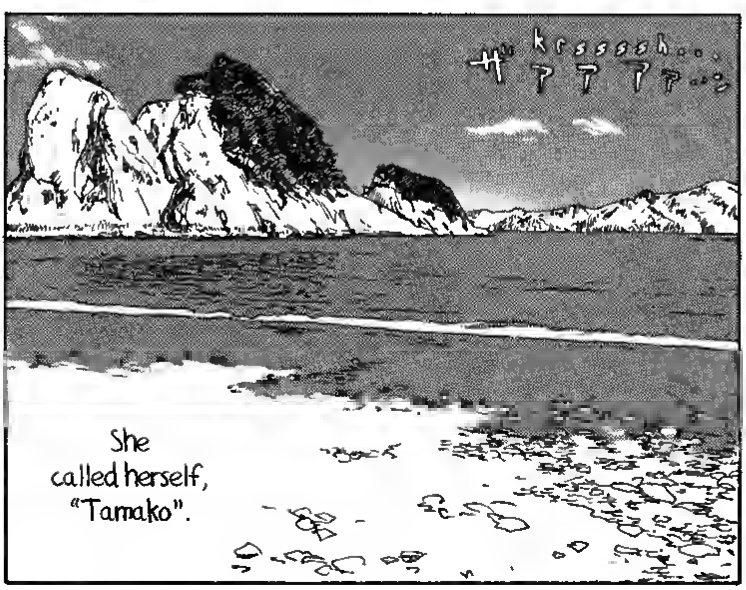
I came here 'cause I thought there'd be sandy beaches,

Uhm...
Hello there. Nice to meet you.
...No, I haven't.
Have you seen someone drawing portraits?
Itou-san be...?
Where could...
...
...I see.
...Thanks.

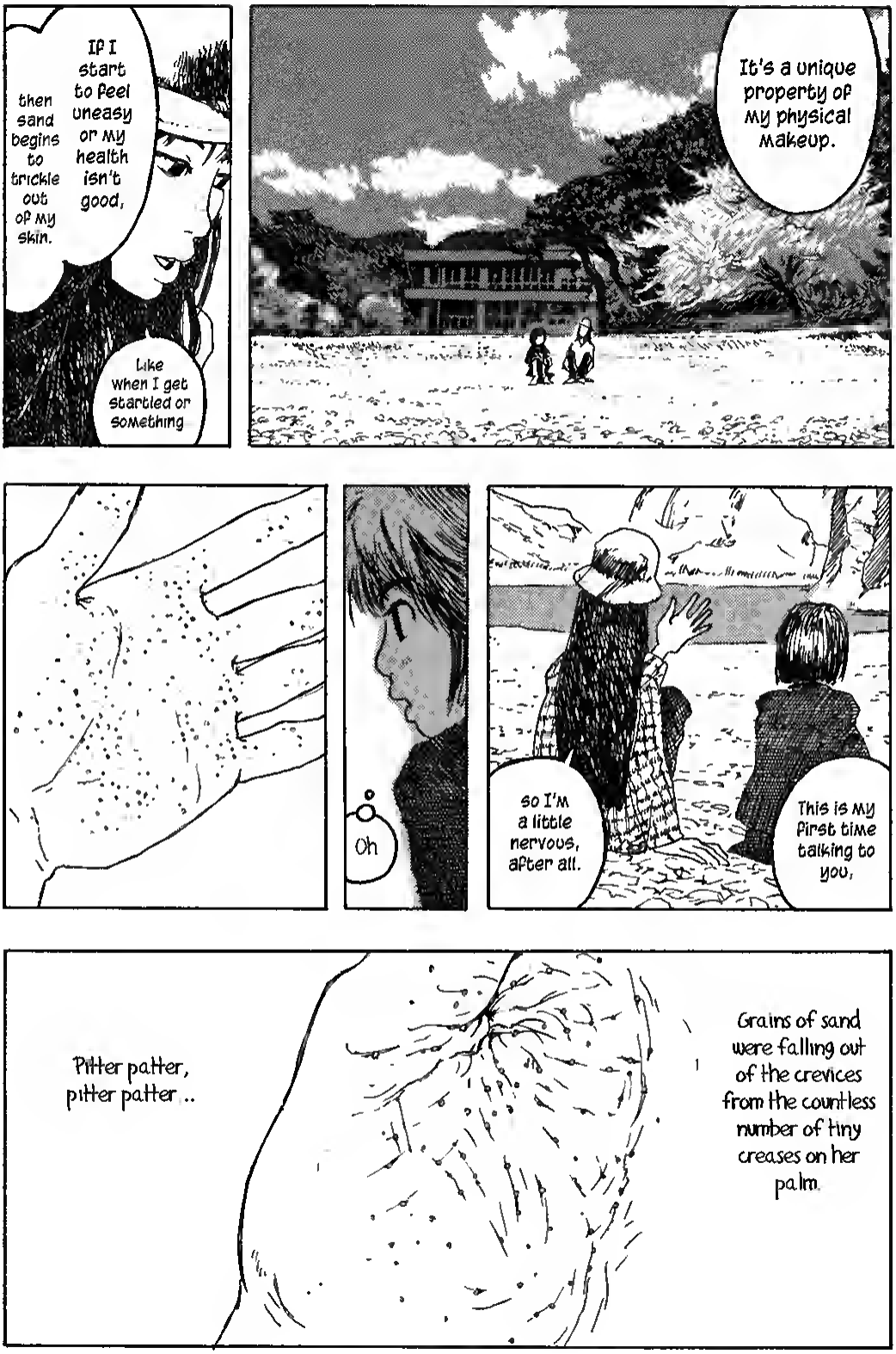
Whoa.
It's a flurry of petals.
Ow!
!
...
I'M sorry!
Some sand got in my eye


That's what I'm apologizing for!
Huh? Oh, some sand got into my eye, that's all...


That sand...
came out of me.


krssssh...
サアアア...
She called herself, "Tamako".

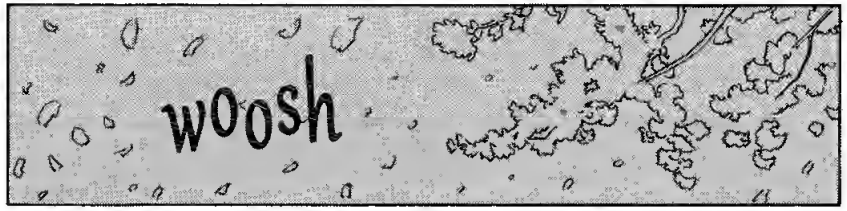
...?


If I start to feel uneasy or my health isn't good,
then sand begins to trickle out of my skin.
Like when I get startled or something
It's a unique property of my physical makeup.
Oh
so I'm a little nervous, after all.
This is my first time talking to you,
Pitter patter, pitter patter...
Grains of sand were falling out of the crevices from the countless number of tiny creases on her palm.

scatter
scatter
scatter
...

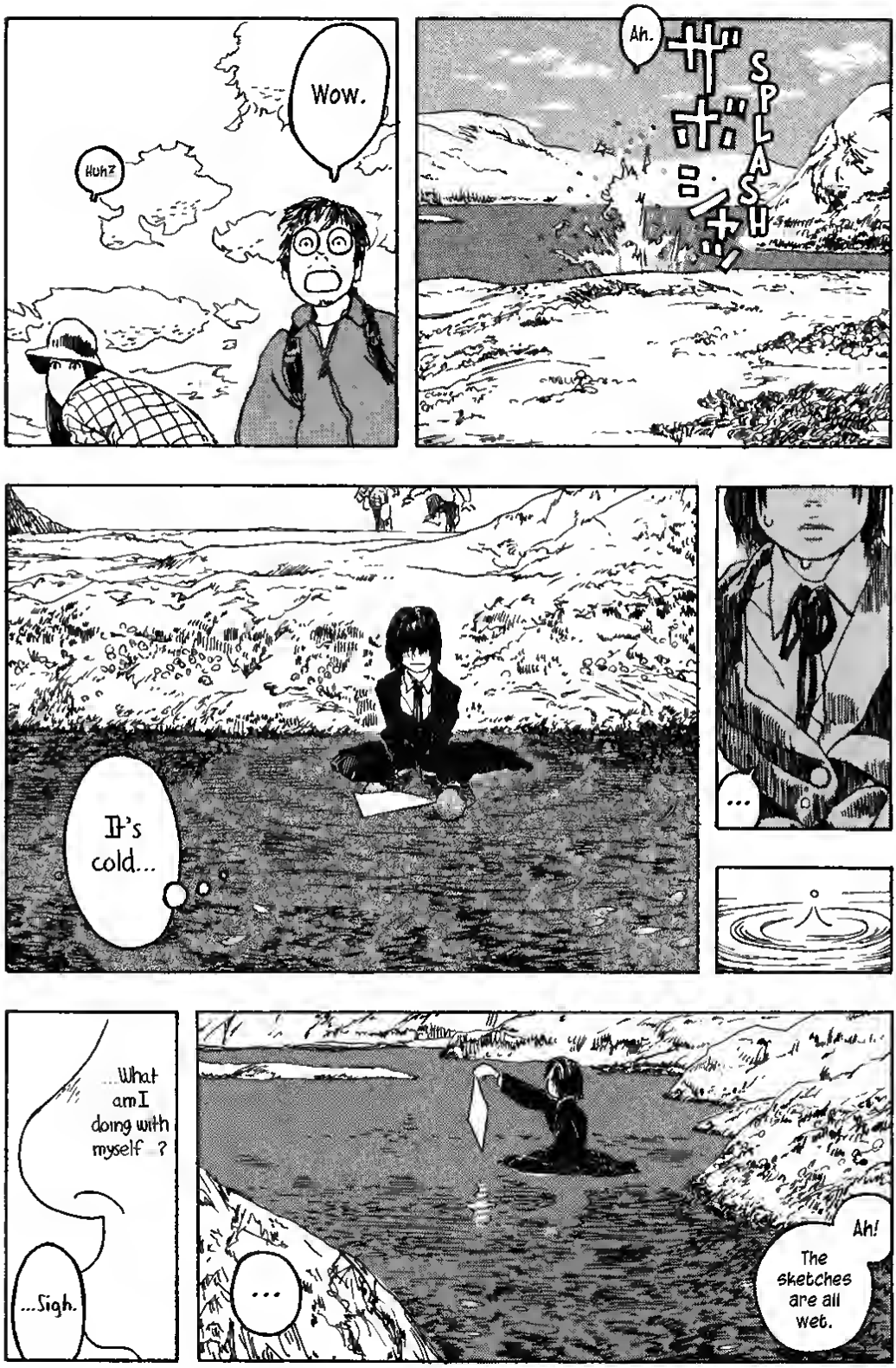
Since... this isn't going as well as I'd like it to.

Oh, nooo!
My sketches ...!

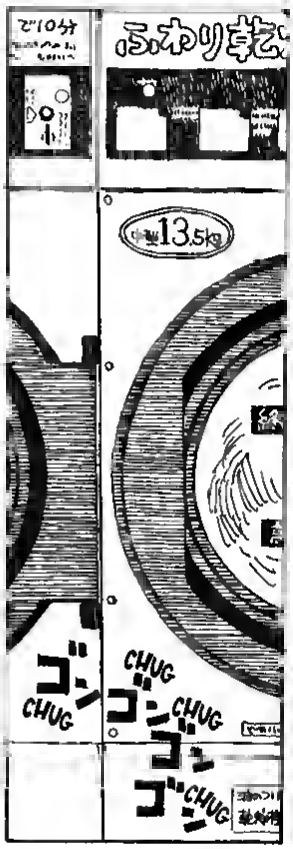

woosh

!
SWISH

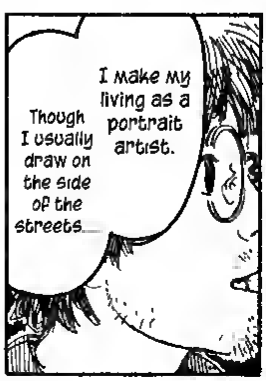
Ahh!
Grab them!
Itou-san!
!

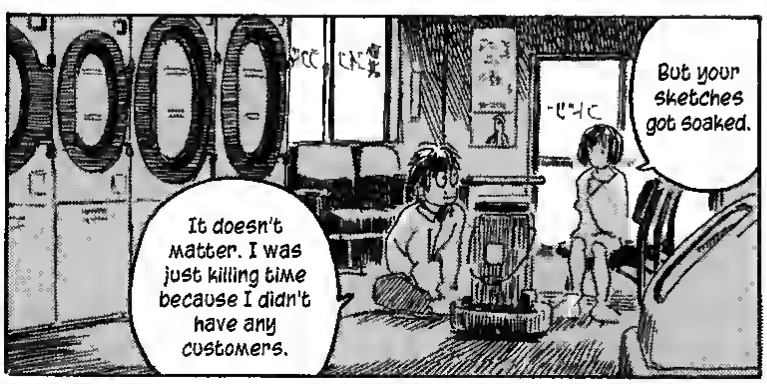

Wow.
Huh?
Ah.
SPLASH
ザボーン
It's cold...
...
...What am I doing with myself...?
...Sigh.
...
Ah! The sketches are all wet.

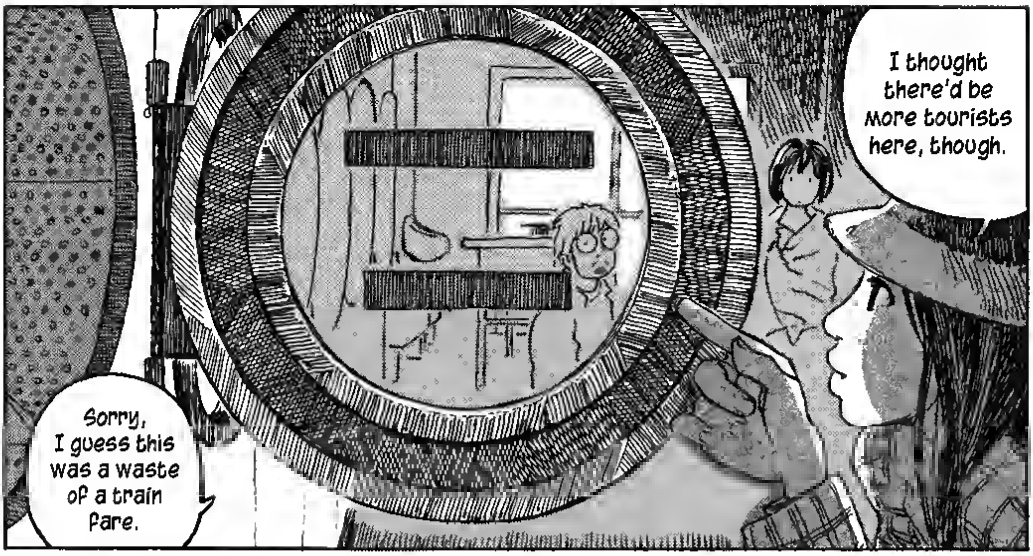
Hachoo!
Sorry, this is all my fault.

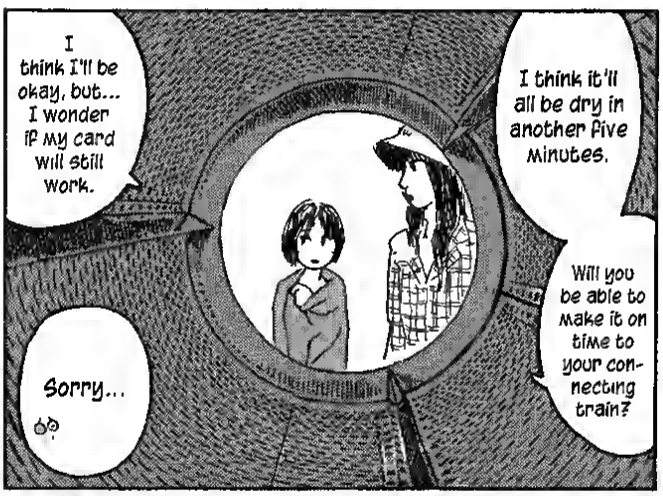

13.5kg
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG

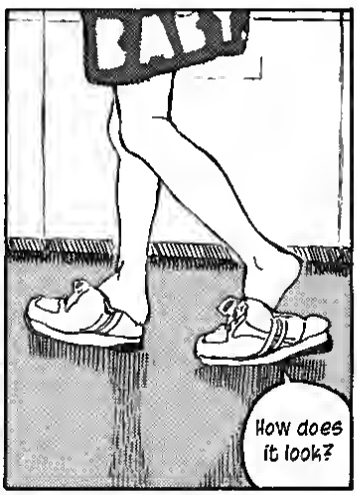
It's okay. I'm all warmed up already.
Still... Sorry.


I make my living as a portrait artist.
Though I usually draw on the side of the streets...


But your sketches got soaked.
It doesn't matter. I was just killing time because I didn't have any customers.

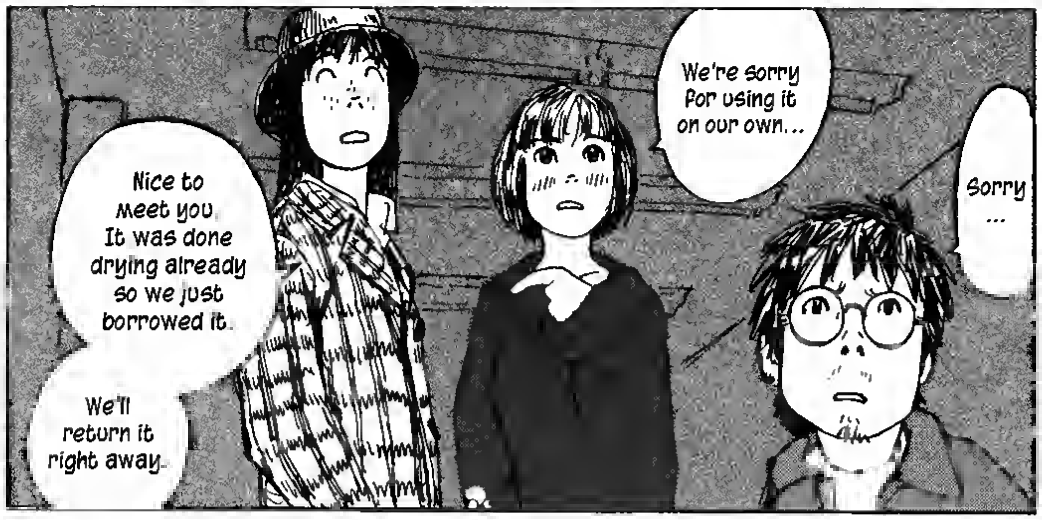

I thought there'd be more tourists here, though.
Sorry, I guess this was a waste of a train fare.

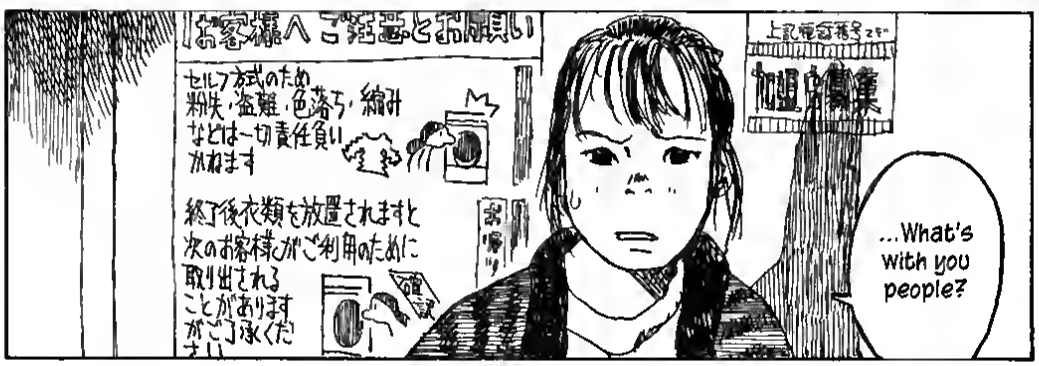

I think I'll be okay, but... I wonder if my card will still work.
I think it'll all be dry in another five minutes.
Will you be able to make it on time to your connecting train?
Sorry...

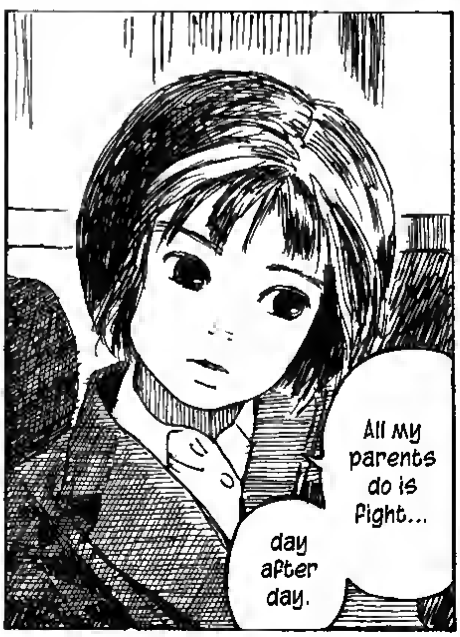

How does it look?

!
Hey!
That bath towel's mine!

カラカラ
SLIDE SLIDE

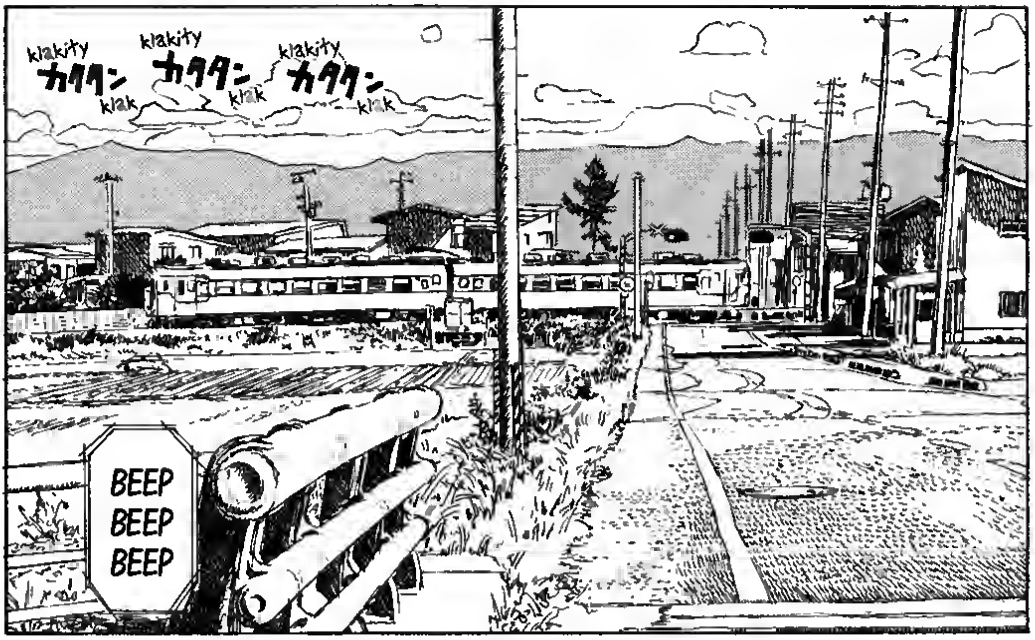

Nice to meet you. It was done drying already so we just borrowed it.
We'll return it right away.
We're sorry for using it on our own...
Sorry ...


お客様へご連絡とお願い
セルフ方式のため
紛失・盗難・色落ち・縮み
などは一切責任負いかねます
終了後衣類を放置されますと
次のお客様がご利用のために
取り出される
ことがあります
がご了承ください
...What's with you people?


All my parents do is fight...
day after day.

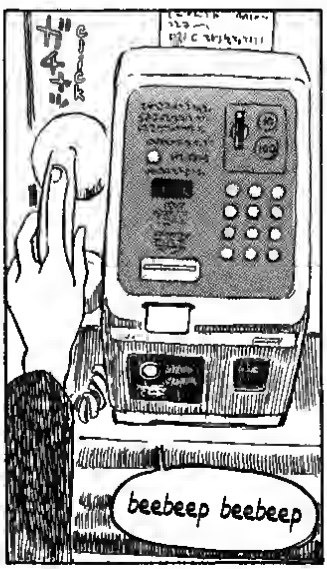
ゴトンゴトン
K-LAK K-LAK
I don't want to go back home
KLAK
ゴトンゴトン

...I'm fed up with watching them fight.
Every single day.
Whenever they catch sight of one another they quarrel.
Maybe getting there mattered to me so much because I never wanted to be home.
It's not like I really enjoy school, either.
...
I don't want to go back home.
BADUMP BADUMP
ドクン ドクン

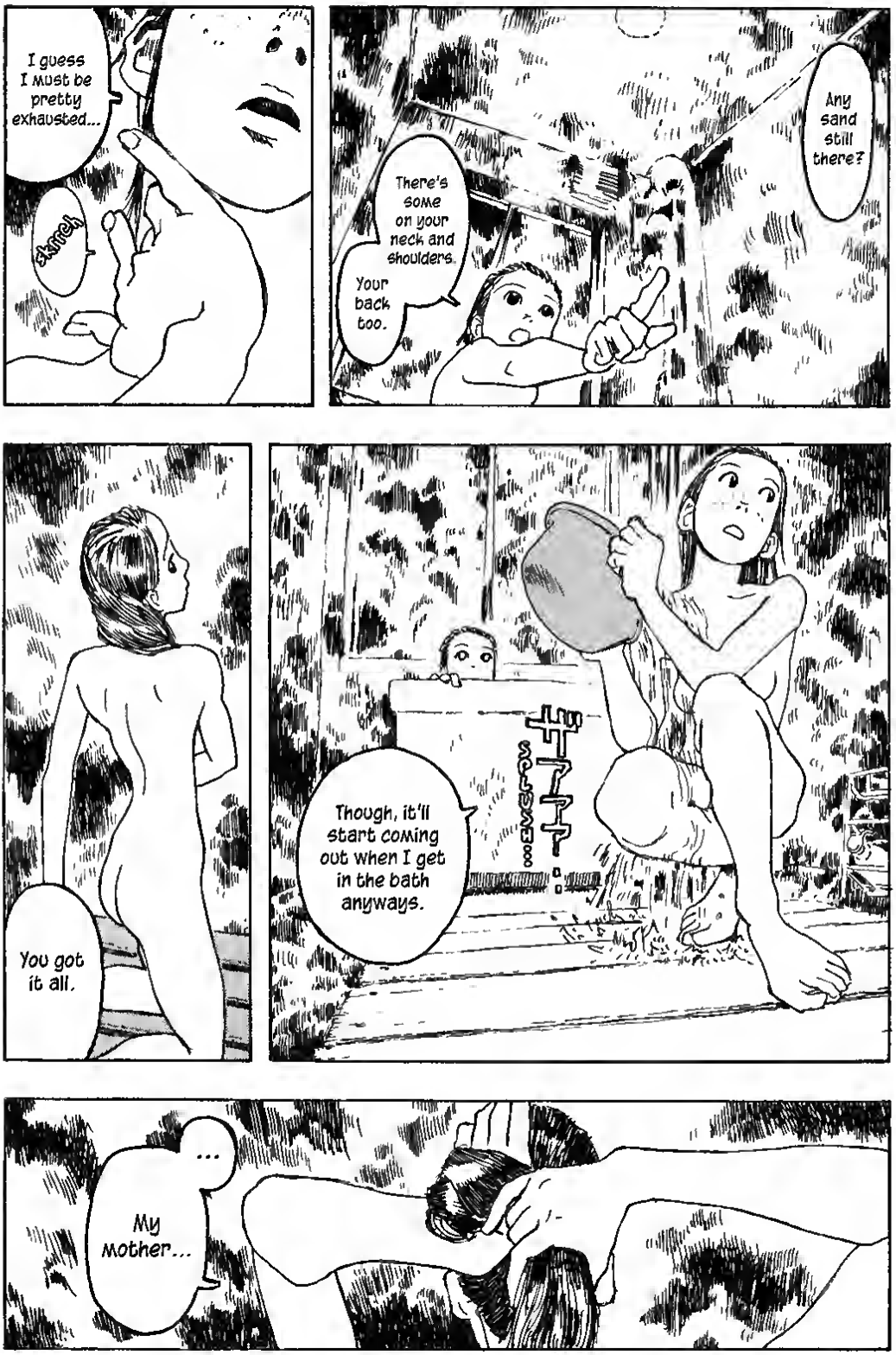

klakity カタタン klak
klakity カタタン klak
klakity カタタン klak
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

I lied.
...
GOOD AFTERNOON, AT THE TONE IT WILL BE SEVEN TWENTY-EIGHT AND FIFTY SECONDS.
BEEP
GOOD AFTERNOON, AT THE TONE IT WILL BE SEVEN TWENTY-NINE, EXACTLY.

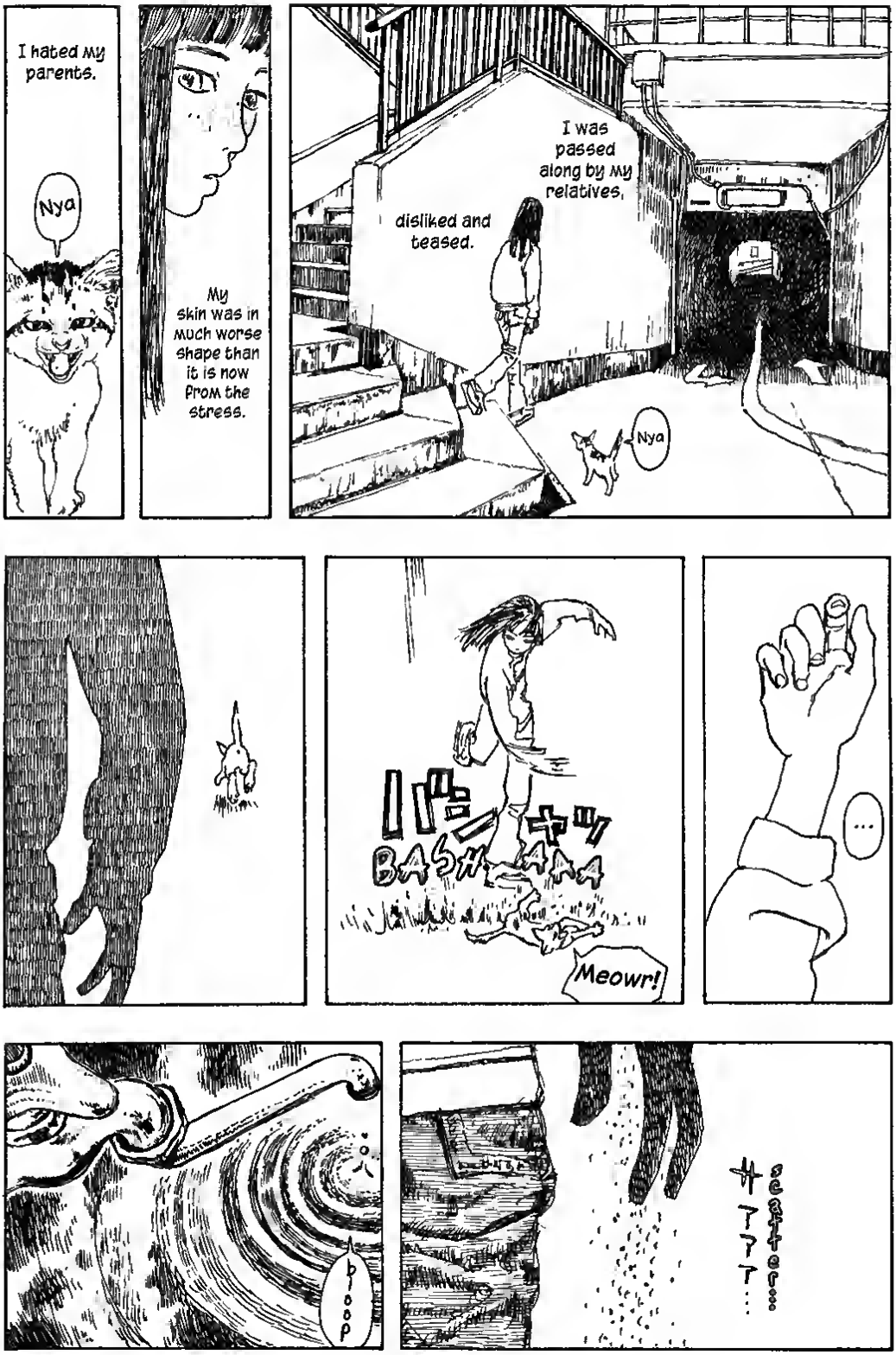
She said it was fine and to thank you...
What did your mother say?

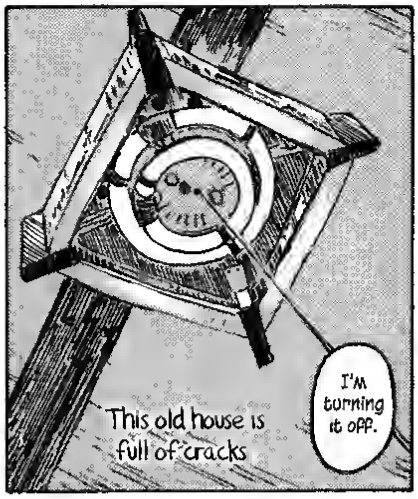

click
beebeep beebeep

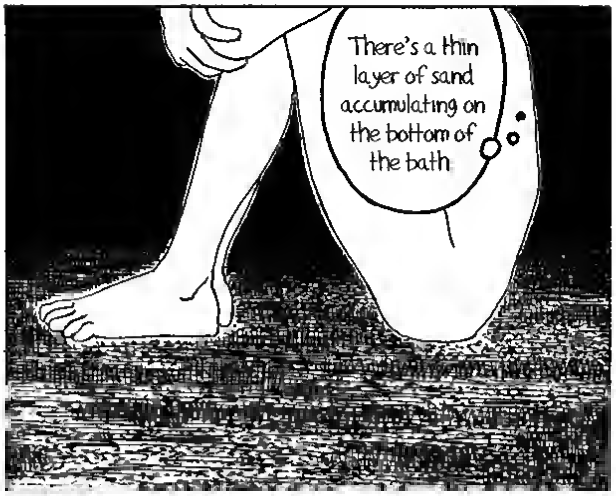
This is the first time we've had a guest over. I'm so excited!
Of course.
Uhm, is it really okay that I stay over?
That's the way I feel, since...
But I don't think it's a good thing to worry your parents too much.
Treasure them.
I'm the one that killed my mother...


I guess I must be pretty exhausted...
Ahmeh
Any sand still there?
There's some on your neck and shoulders.
Your back too.
You got it all.
ザアアア…
Though, it'll start coming out when I get in the bath anyways.
...
My mother...

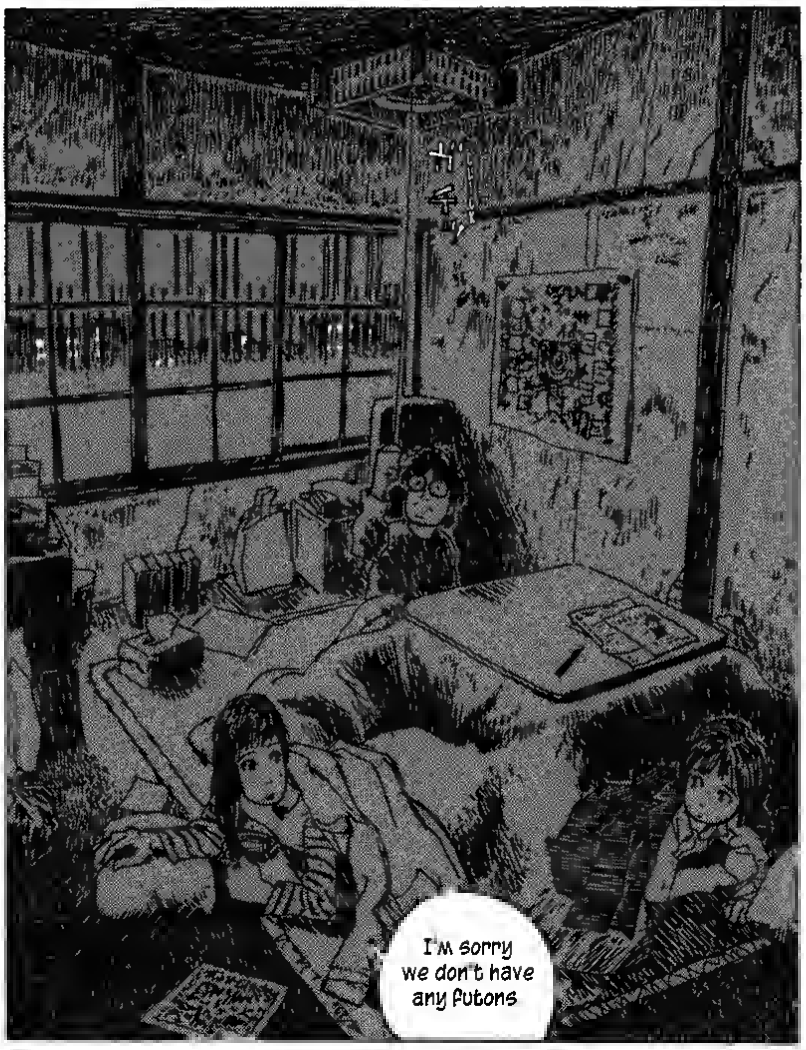
What came out of her womb together with me was...
She died because she gave birth to me.
globs of mud
crimson and oozing in blood
It makes sense.
Sand gushes out of my body, so just cleaning up would be hard work.
I must have been a real handful to take care of.
...My father left me behind and disappeared right after it happened.
My mother's health was poor after she gave birth.
She died a half year later.


I hated my parents.
Nya
My skin was in much worse shape than it is now from the stress.
I was passed along by my relatives,
disliked and teased.
Nya
BASH
Meowr!
...
bloop
scatter...
ｶｱｱｱ...

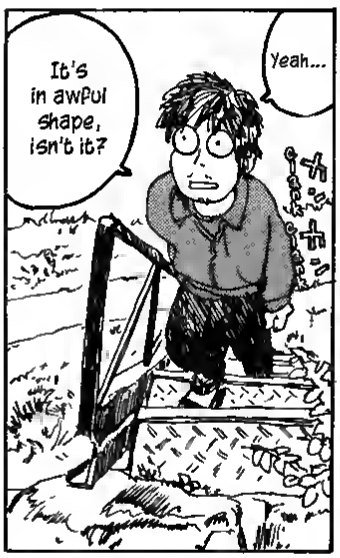

This old house is full of cracks
I'm turning it off.


There's a thin layer of sand accumulating on the bottom of the bath

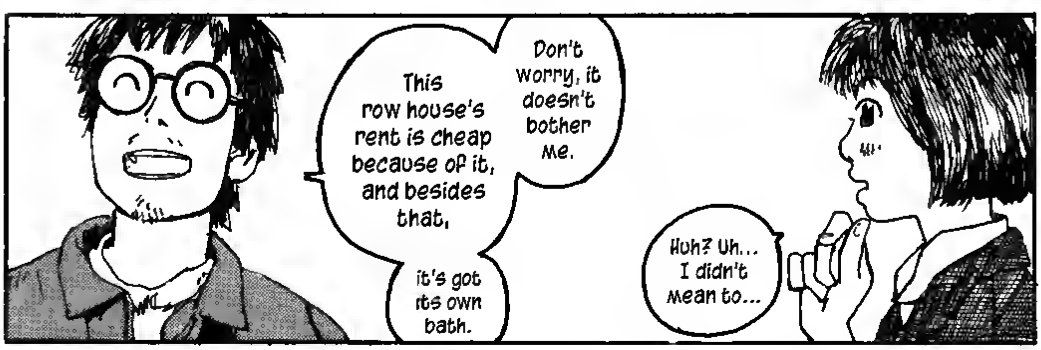
It's okay.
Good night.
I couldn't tell if the rough feeling of the tatami mats came from the sand from Tamako, or if it was some that had been tracked in from outside.
Could it be...?

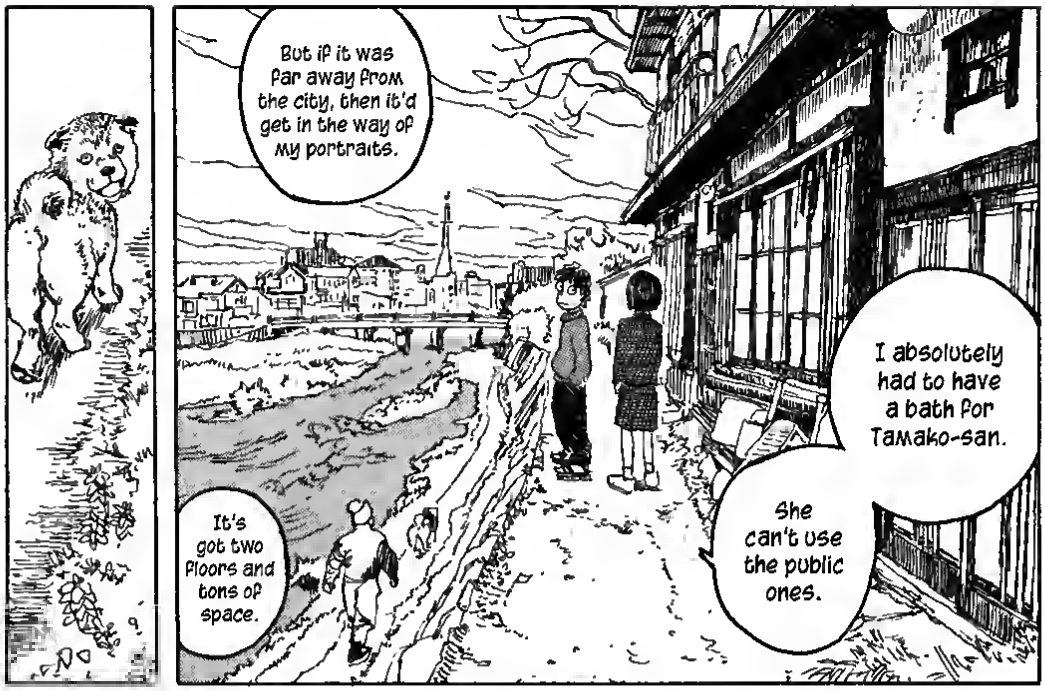

I'm sorry we don't have any futons

Are they living in a shabby place like this so the sand isn't noticeable?
It really is run down.


It's in awful shape, isn't it?
Yeah...

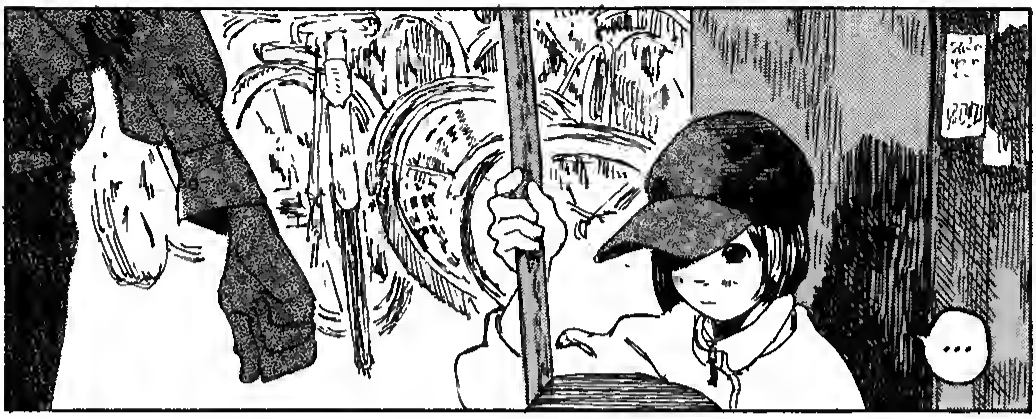
Oh
Good morning.
Taking a walk?
Good morning.


This row house's rent is cheap because of it, and besides that,
Don't worry, it doesn't bother me.
it's got its own bath.
Huh? Uh... I didn't mean to...


But if it was far away from the city, then it'd get in the way of my portraits.
It's got two floors and tons of space.
I absolutely had to have a bath for Tamako-san.
She can't use the public ones.

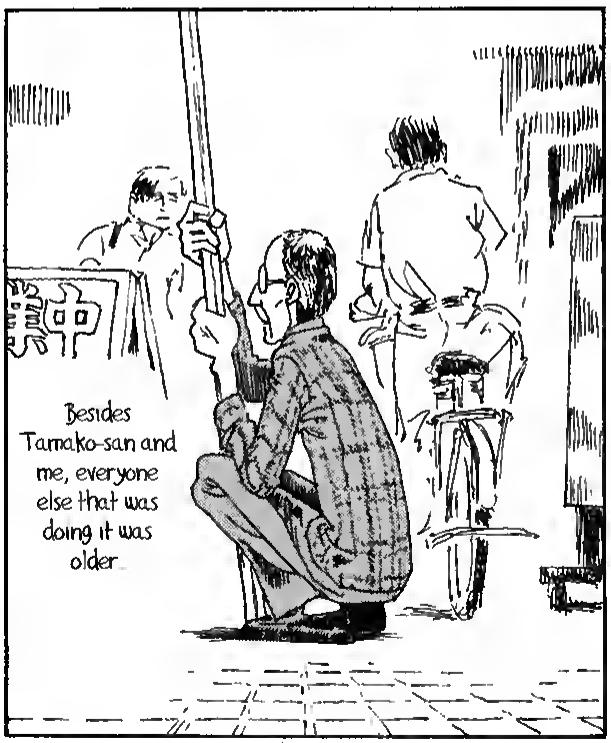
I guess they don't have much money

I wanted to at least pay for my own food...
so I had Tamako-san introduce me to a part-time job.
募集!
ビデオBOX
TOM

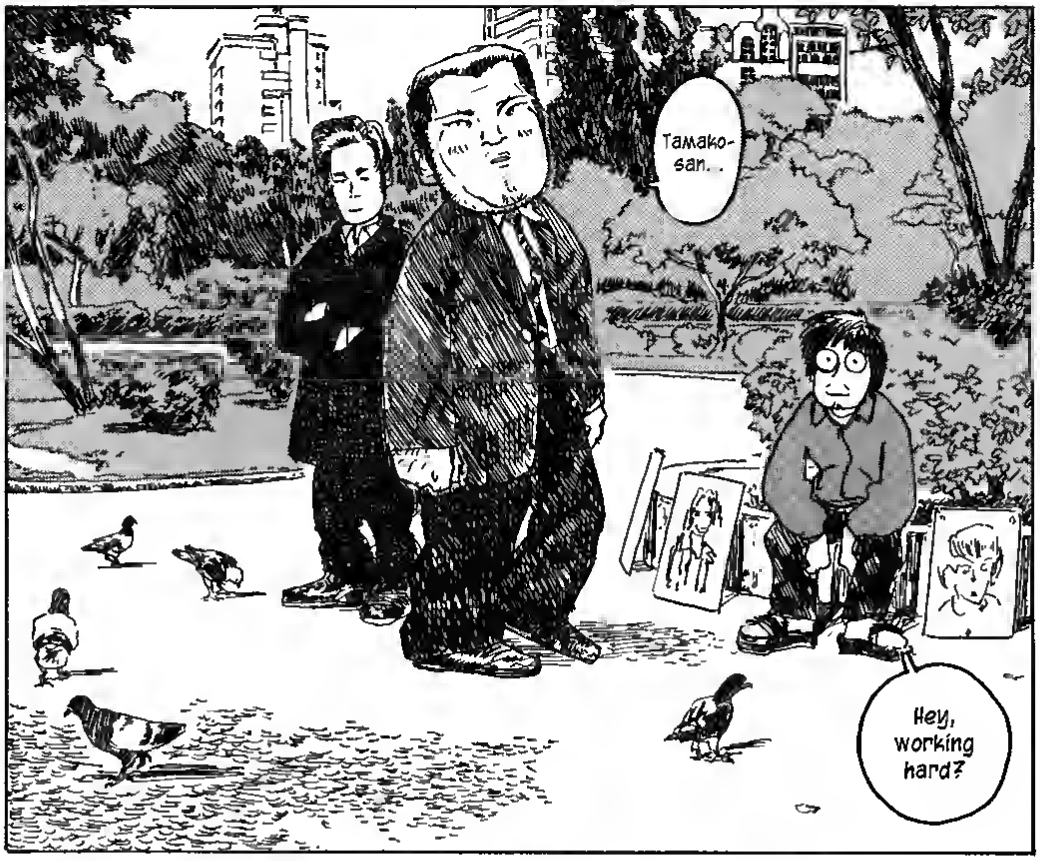

...

It was just a job where I stood around in the street holding a signboard.

How's it going? You bored?


Besides Tamako-san and me, everyone else that was doing it was older.

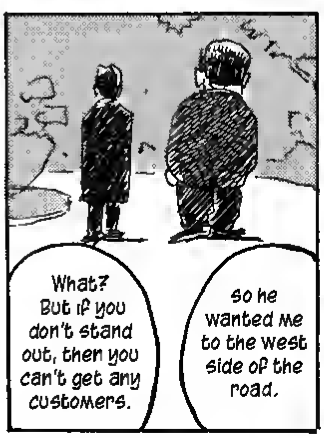
When I get to see the city like this,
it makes me think about how there are all sorts of people in this world.
...But
This is exhausting in its own sense.
that's sort of a relief.
And for some reason,
Oh, Tatsuzaki-san!


Tamako-san...
Hey, working hard?

He said I was standing out a bit too much over here,
What did he want?

Well, Itou, that's how it is, so...
Yup. I under-stand.
Thanks.

There's nothing I can do about it.
Is he a... gang-ster?

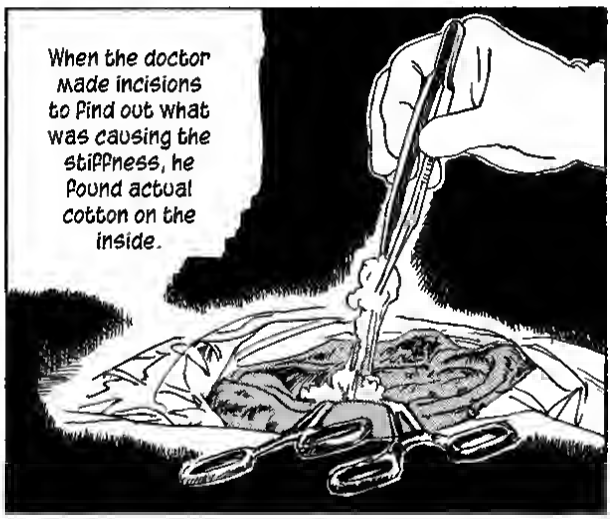

What? But if you don't stand out, then you can't get any customers.
so he wanted me to the west side of the road.

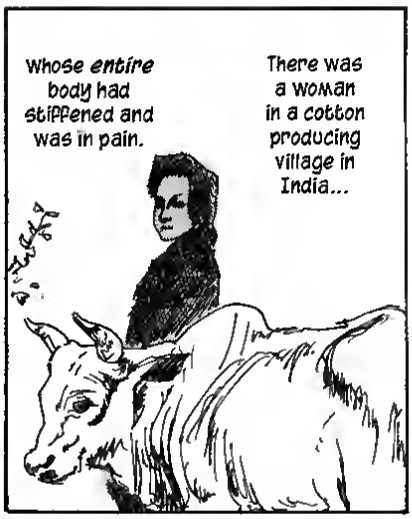
He was a classmate of mine so he's letting it slide...
I'm grateful enough for the fact that he lets me run a business in this park.
...There are people who end up with stones in their organs, right?
Cheers!
Like how people can get water on the knee.
Huh? Is it one of those things?
Hmm. I dunno.
I think it's something like that.

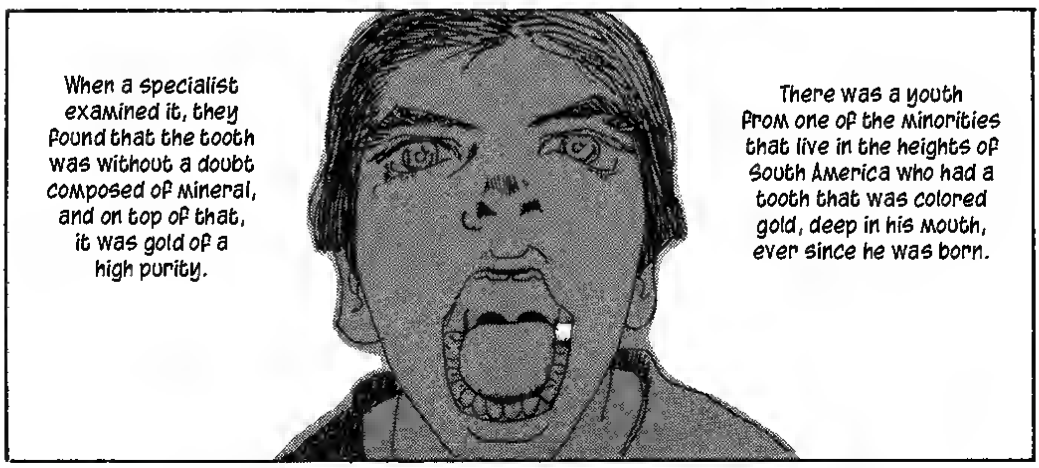
Once I tried to see how much sand I could make come out, but...
It's like the blood or the fluids in my body turn into sand.
Uhm, I'm pretty sure it was... about three buckets worth...
...How much sand came out?
...I fainted from anemia.

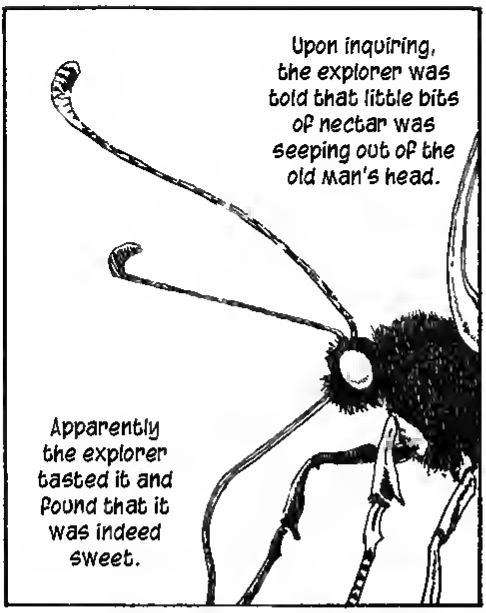
I couldn't get rid of the dark circles around my eyes for an entire month.
That's when I lost consciousness.
I thought I was going to die.
Hey, boss, do you have any stir-fried shirataki?
You want shirataki...?

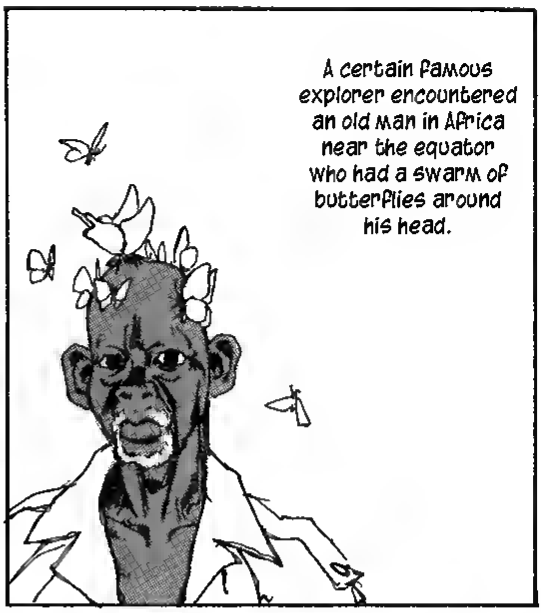
I read this in a book once.
Zzz

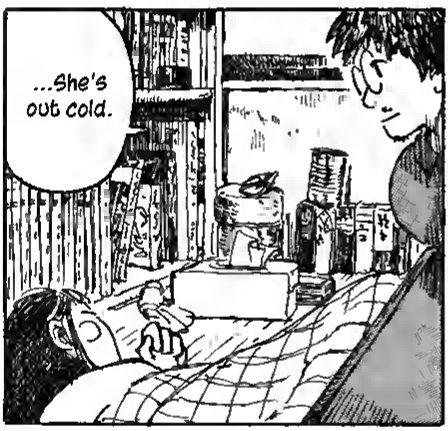

When the doctor made incisions to find out what was causing the stiffness, he found actual cotton on the inside.

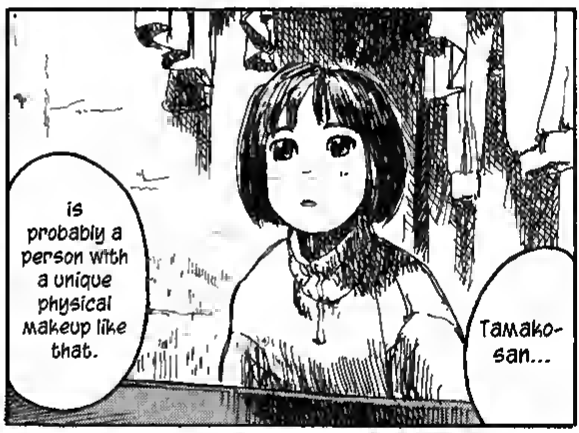

There was a woman in a cotton producing village in India...
Whose *entire* body had stiffened and was in pain.

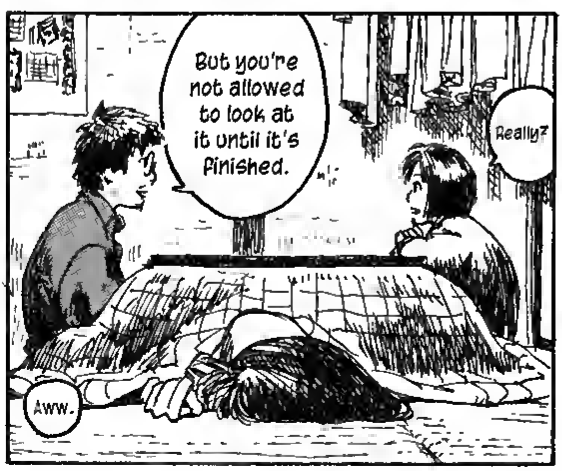

When a specialist examined it, they found that the tooth was without a doubt composed of mineral, and on top of that, it was gold of a high purity.
There was a youth from one of the minorities that live in the heights of South America who had a tooth that was colored gold, deep in his mouth, ever since he was born.


Upon inquiring, the explorer was told that little bits of nectar was seeping out of the old man's head.
Apparently the explorer tasted it and found that it was indeed sweet.


A certain famous explorer encountered an old man in Africa near the equator who had a swarm of butterflies around his head.

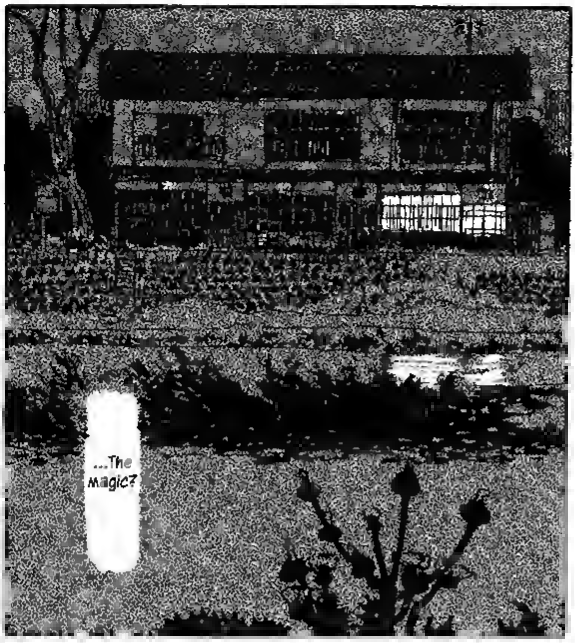

...She's out cold.

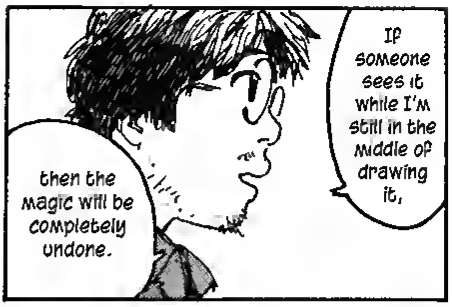

is probably a person with a unique physical makeup like that.
Tamako-san...

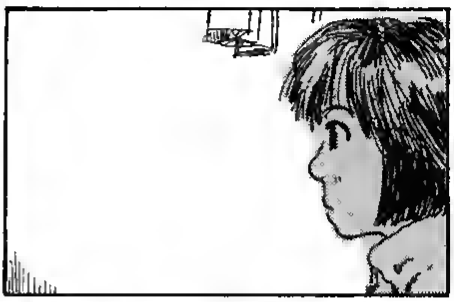

But you're not allowed to look at it until it's finished.
Really?
Aww.

I'm actually in the middle of drawing a picture of Tamako-san. It's on the second floor.

It's been a while since she's had a drink.


...The magic?


If someone sees it while I'm still in the middle of drawing it,
then the magic will be completely undone.



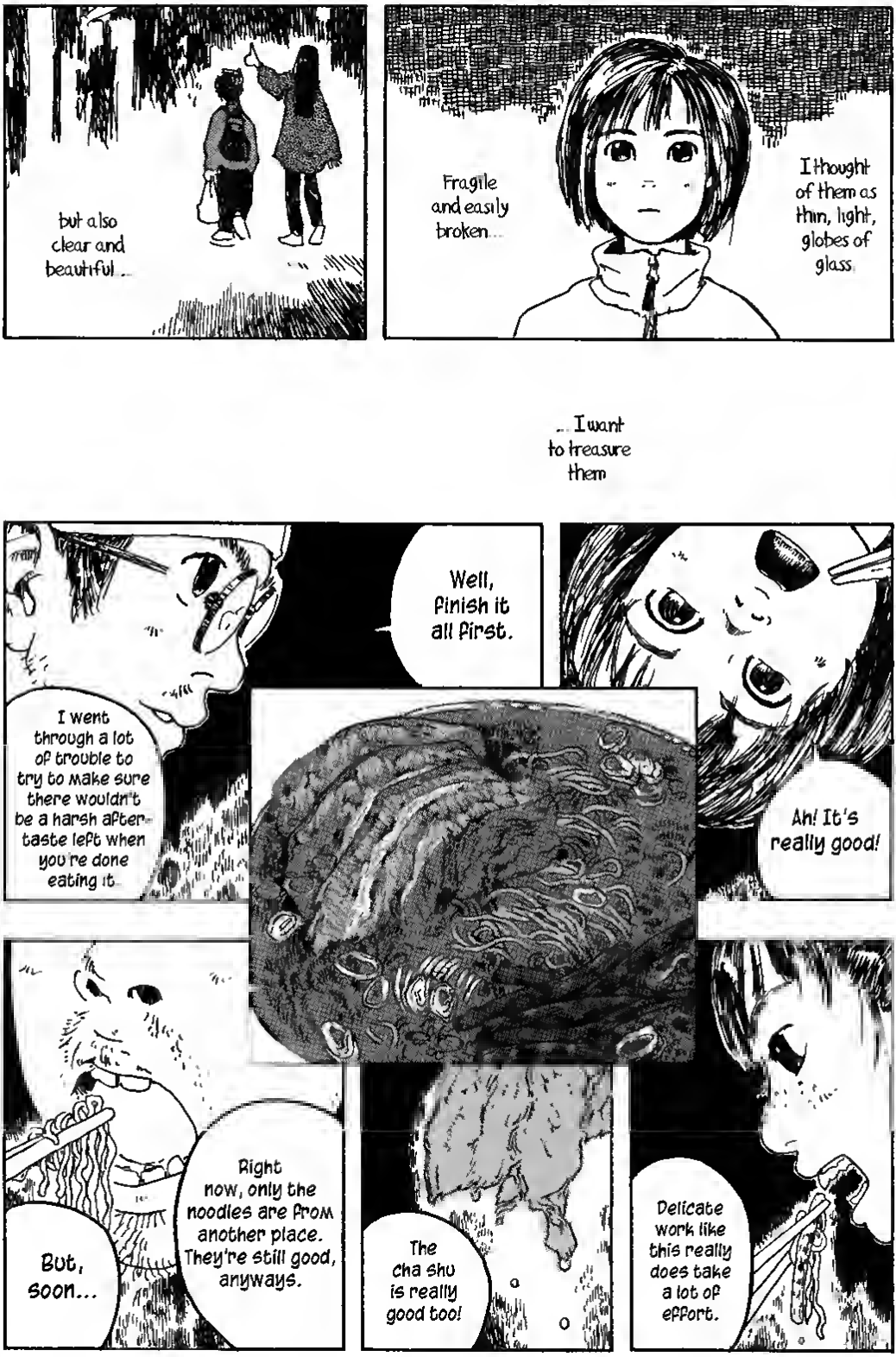
Okay, good work, this is for today.

I continued to stay in their room, paying them back gradually.
Okay, good work, this is for today.

If he's having money problems, tell him that I'm willing to be his sugar daddy anytime.
Is he doing okay?
I haven't seen Itou-chan around here lately.
キィ…
CREEK…
Oh, there he is.
…
Gimme your pen.
Oh, I'm good at those.
Ah!
What? A portrait?

So...
Uh... What was I talking about again?
See, look! I'm pretty good, right?
...
Nice!
GYAHA-H !
Uhm...
The pen...
You made me forget what I was sayin'!
Sorry...
Itou-san!
Sorry.
It's okay.
I'll come back again.
...

..Phew
I'm sort of exhausted today.
Oh, is it that late already?
Tamako-san went on ahead,
or she wouldn't be able to buy any of the half-priced bentos.
夜 12時
P
Look!
Hey!
...
The stars!
They're so pretty today!
These two...


but also clear and beautiful...
Fragile and easily broken...
I thought of them as thin, light, globes of glass.
...I want to treasure them
Well, finish it all first.
I went through a lot of trouble to try to make sure there wouldn't be a harsh after-taste left when you're done eating it.
Ah! It's really good!
But, soon...
Right now, only the noodles are from another place. They're still good, anyways.
The cha shu is really good too!
Delicate work like this really does take a lot of effort.

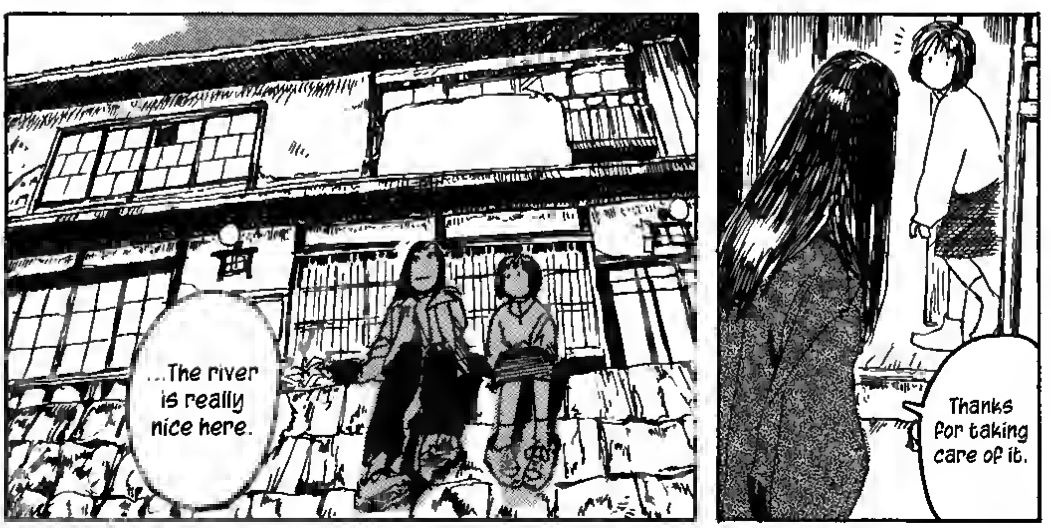
A stall for great ramen and portraits.
It's more of a real goal than a dream.
Yeah.
We'll get a stall someday.
We'll make our own noodles!
Would you like some more broth?
I can pretty much stop the sand from coming out now.
I've got the deposit too, though I haven't saved up much else.
I've been practicing so I can control my body condition for it as well.
Originally this all started because I was wondering if I could make any food out of bones and vegetable scraps.
...This is how...
I was being serious...
...
Oh, you're confident!
Okay, then we'll have you manage our second store.
Me too!
I want to help somehow.

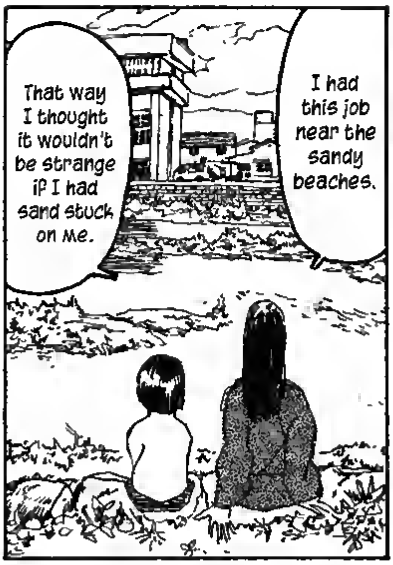
It's so nice outside!
from sand.
glass is made
Tweet
Mmm.
...After you pour out the sand, hang it out over by the second floor window...
Hey, wake up! Today's the day that we're supposed to air out the futons!
Is she having... issues with her health?
Wow, there's so much sand...
swssh...

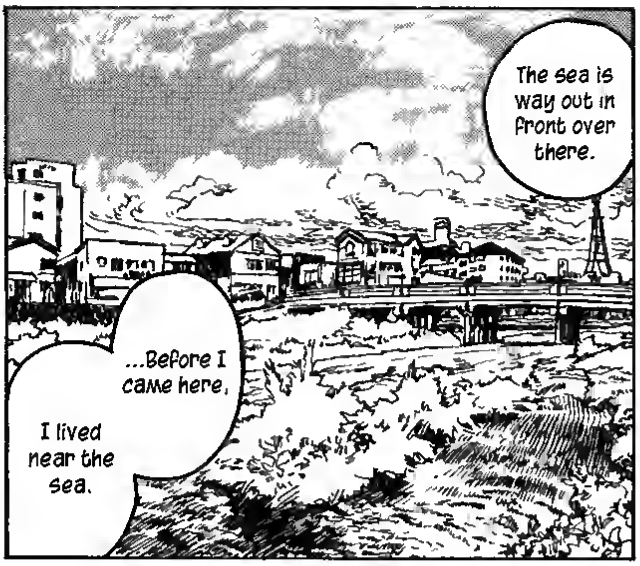
Yeesh! It's a mess...
hup hup hup
Agh, I got some paint on my socks...
my life here would last forever
It had begun to feel like
Let's see.
Oh... Could this be the picture of Tamako-san?
I was happy and having fun with all these little things that didn't really matter
Pat Pat
There we go!

Ah.
Tamako-san... It's beautiful...
...

disappear...?
Will the magic...

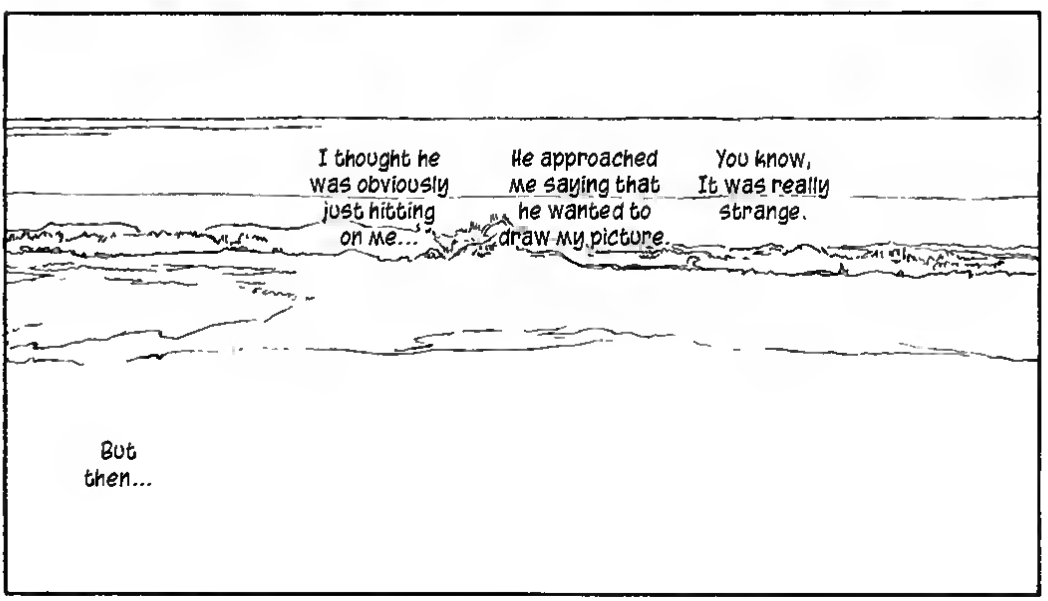

...The river is really nice here.
Thanks for taking care of it.

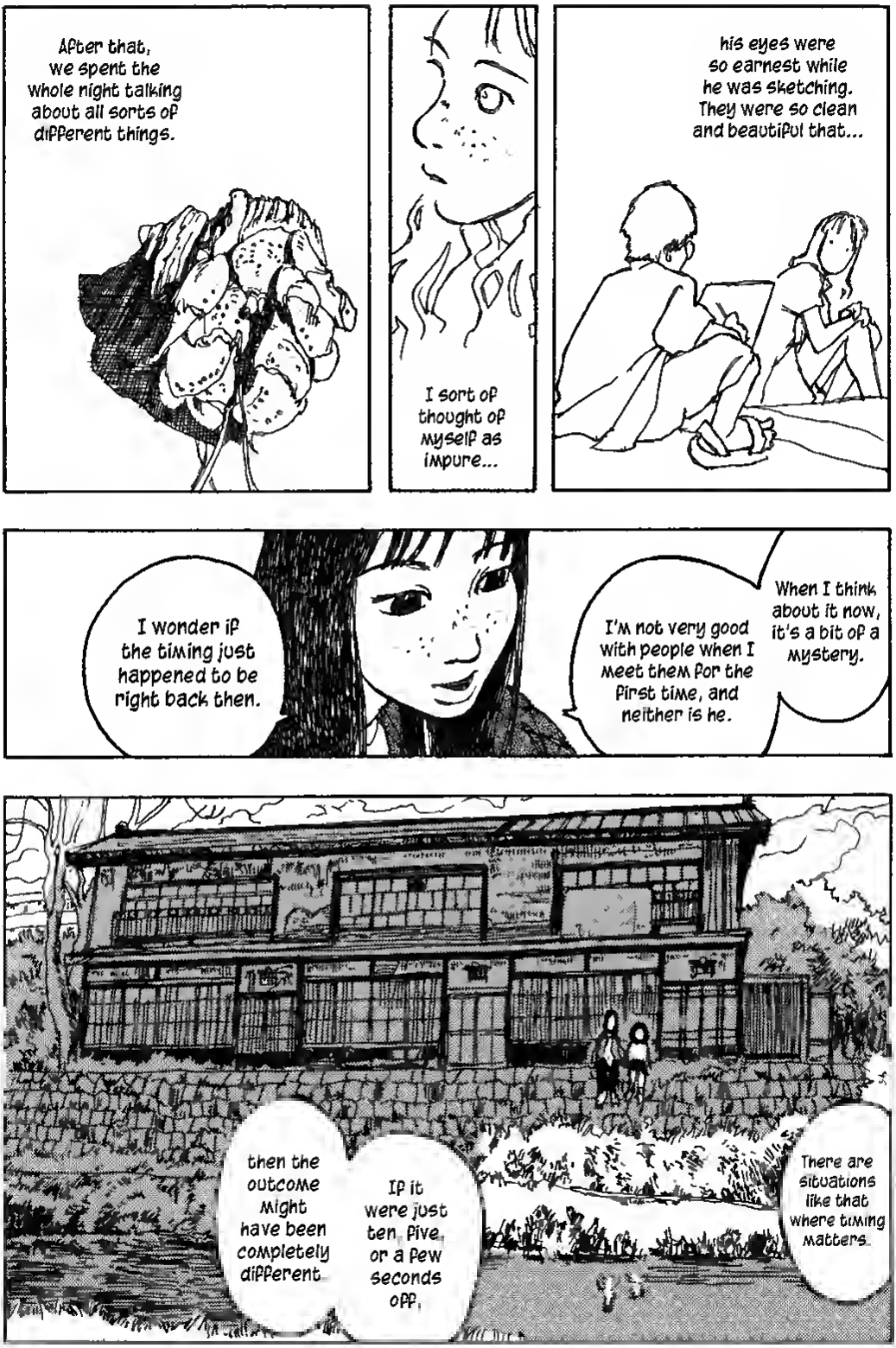

That way I thought it wouldn't be strange if I had sand stuck on me.
I had this job near the sandy beaches.


The sea is way out in front over there.
...Before I came here,
I lived near the sea.

...I met Itou-san on that beach...

A great idea if I do say so myself! Or so I thought.
But it didn't go as well as I planned.


I thought he was obviously just hitting on me...
He approached me saying that he wanted to draw my picture.
You know, It was really strange.
But then...

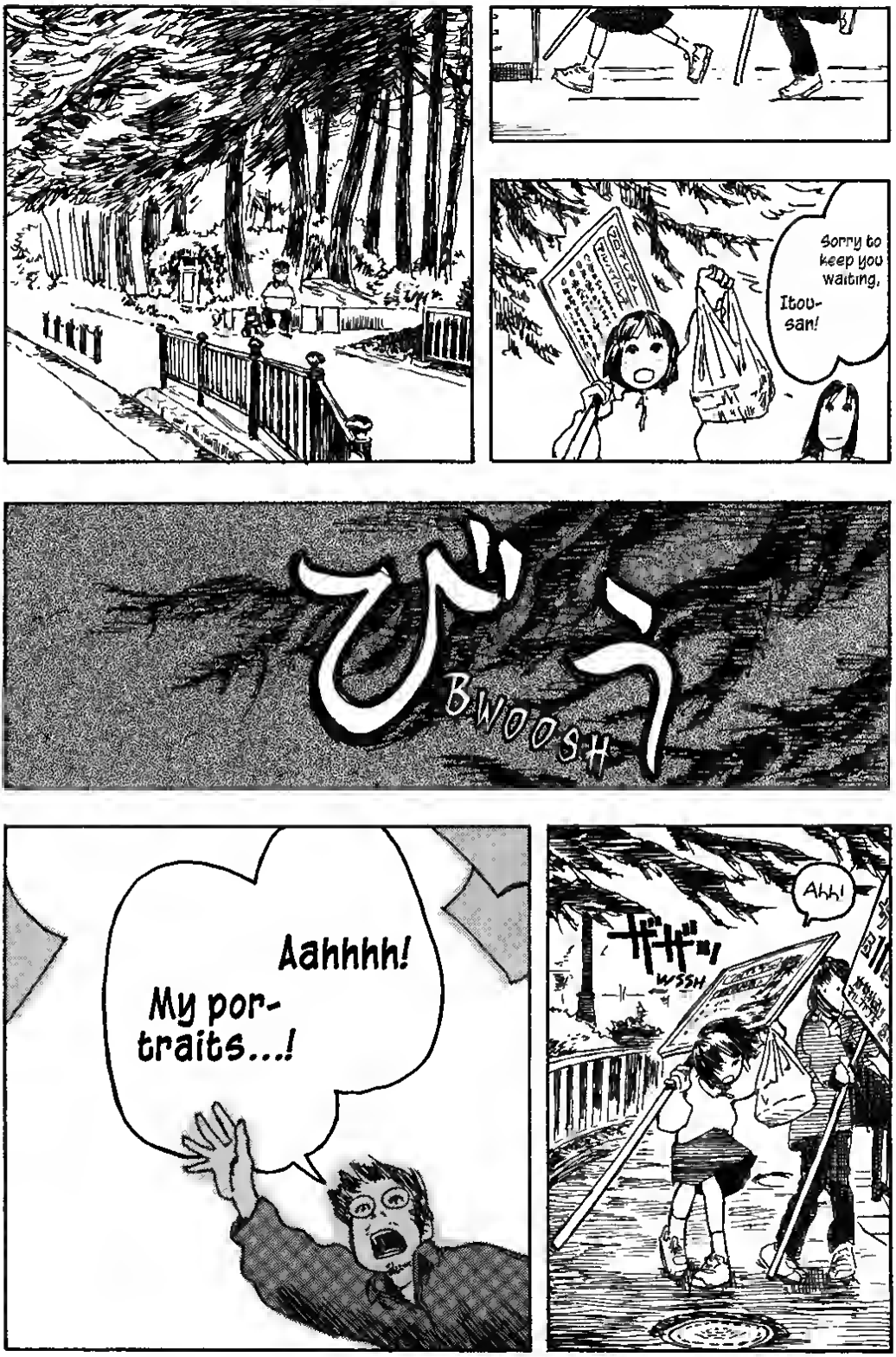

After that, we spent the whole night talking about all sorts of different things.
I sort of thought of myself as impure...
his eyes were so earnest while he was sketching. They were so clean and beautiful that...
I wonder if the timing just happened to be right back then.
I'm not very good with people when I meet them for the first time, and neither is he.
When I think about it now, it's a bit of a mystery.
then the outcome might have been completely different.
If it were just ten, five, or a few seconds off,
There are situations like that where timing matters.

And then I wouldn't have been able to meet you.
If Itou-san had made his way across the beach five minutes later, then he might have never even bumped into me.
and that's how we got where we are now...
The timing of all these coincidences just sort of happens to pile up and become entwined,
completely undone the magic spell.
Hey, it's time to go.
Okaaay.
I may have
Magic...
It's sort of like... Magic.

The wind's picking up.
ゴウ
ROAR
ザァァ
WSSH

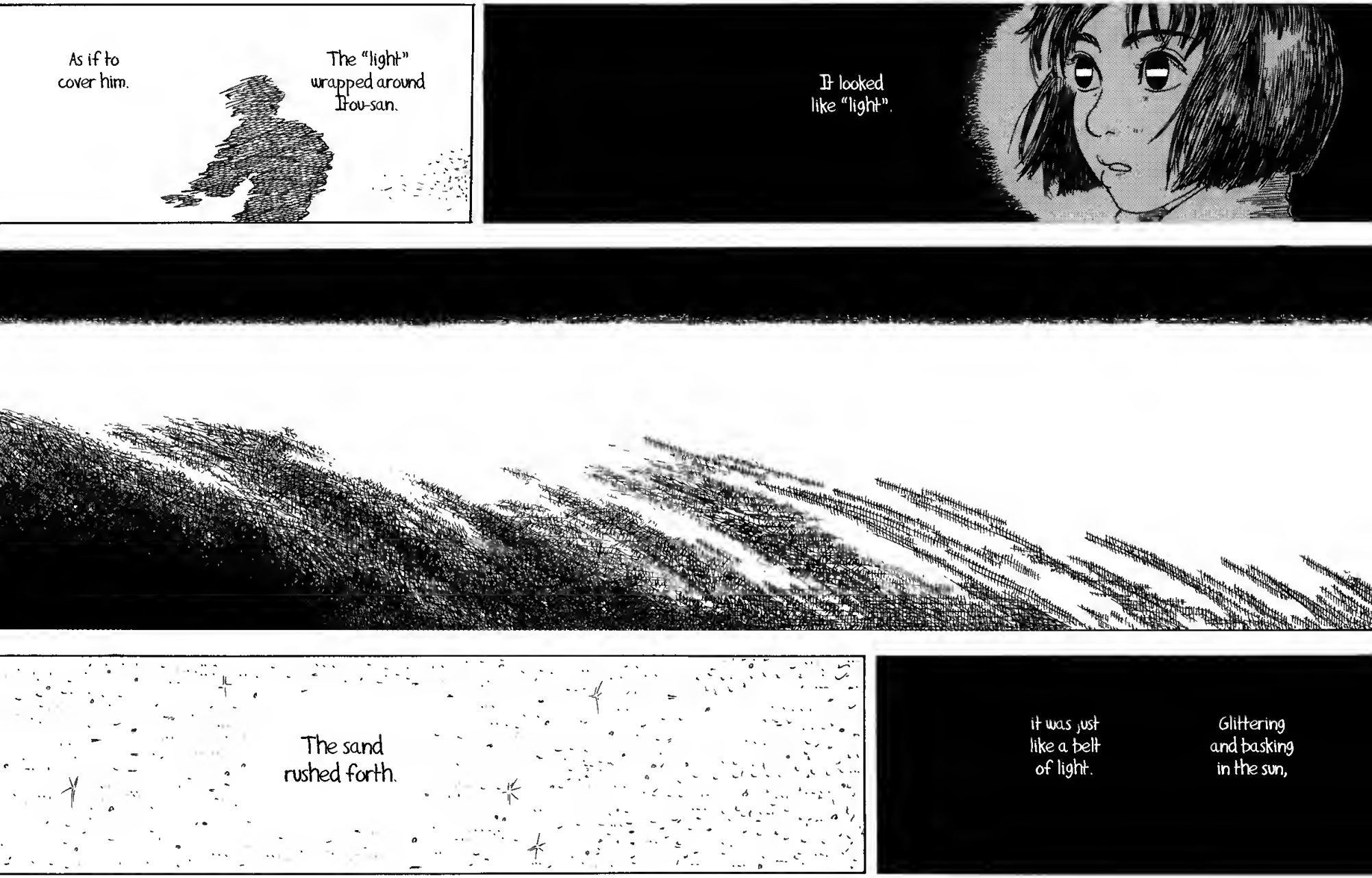
chirp
chirp
chirp

the sand will gradually start to trickle out...
and the wind will carry it away.
if I relax myself little by little,
She's late.
サアアア..
wssh..
It feels good.
It's like all the bad things that have accumulated in my body are being wrung out.
What should we get him?
A sandwich.
ビュウウウ
pppsh
We're being blown away.

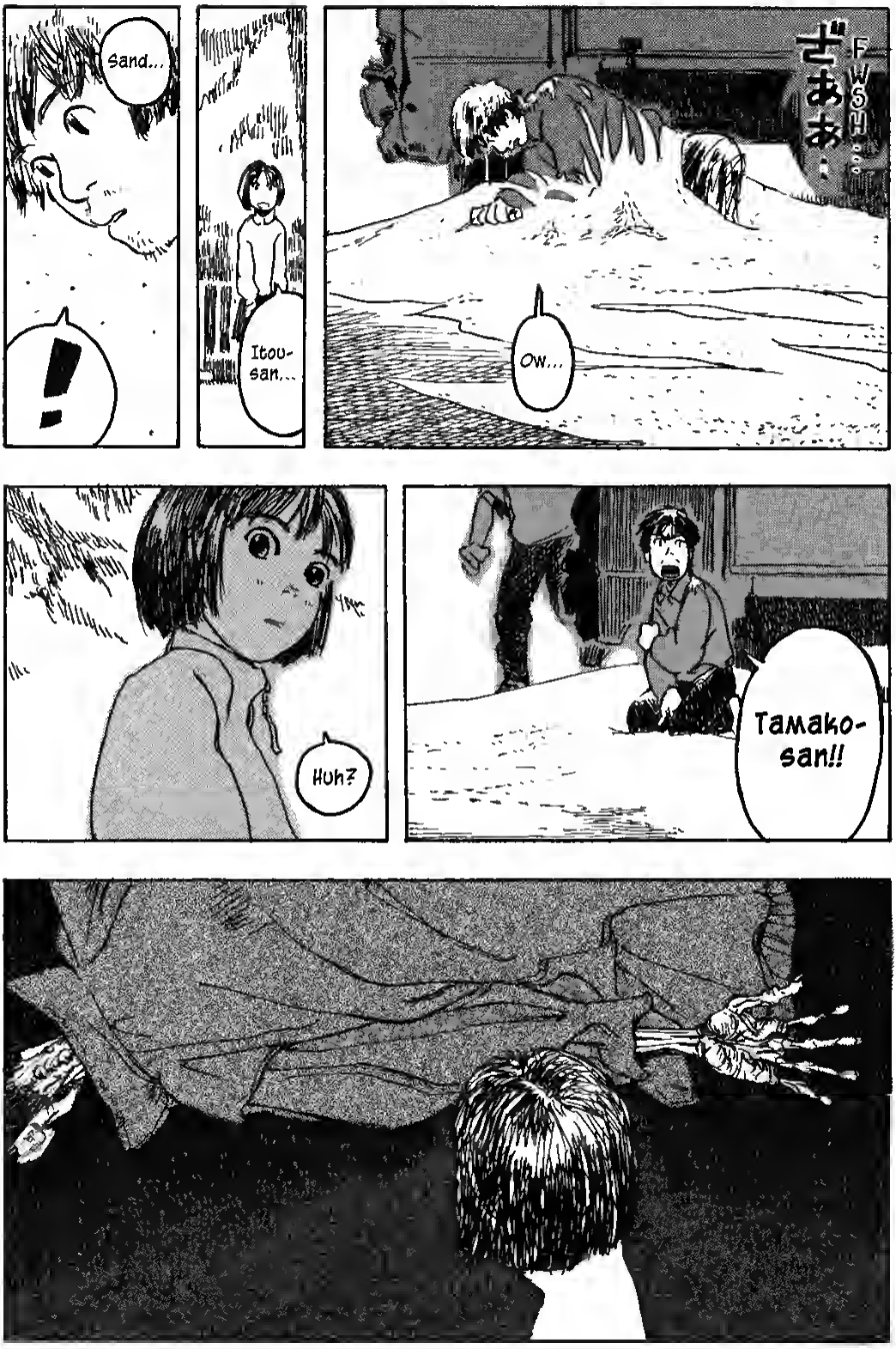

Sorry to keep you waiting, Itou-san!
BWOOSH
Aahhhh! My por-traits...!
Ahh!
WSSH

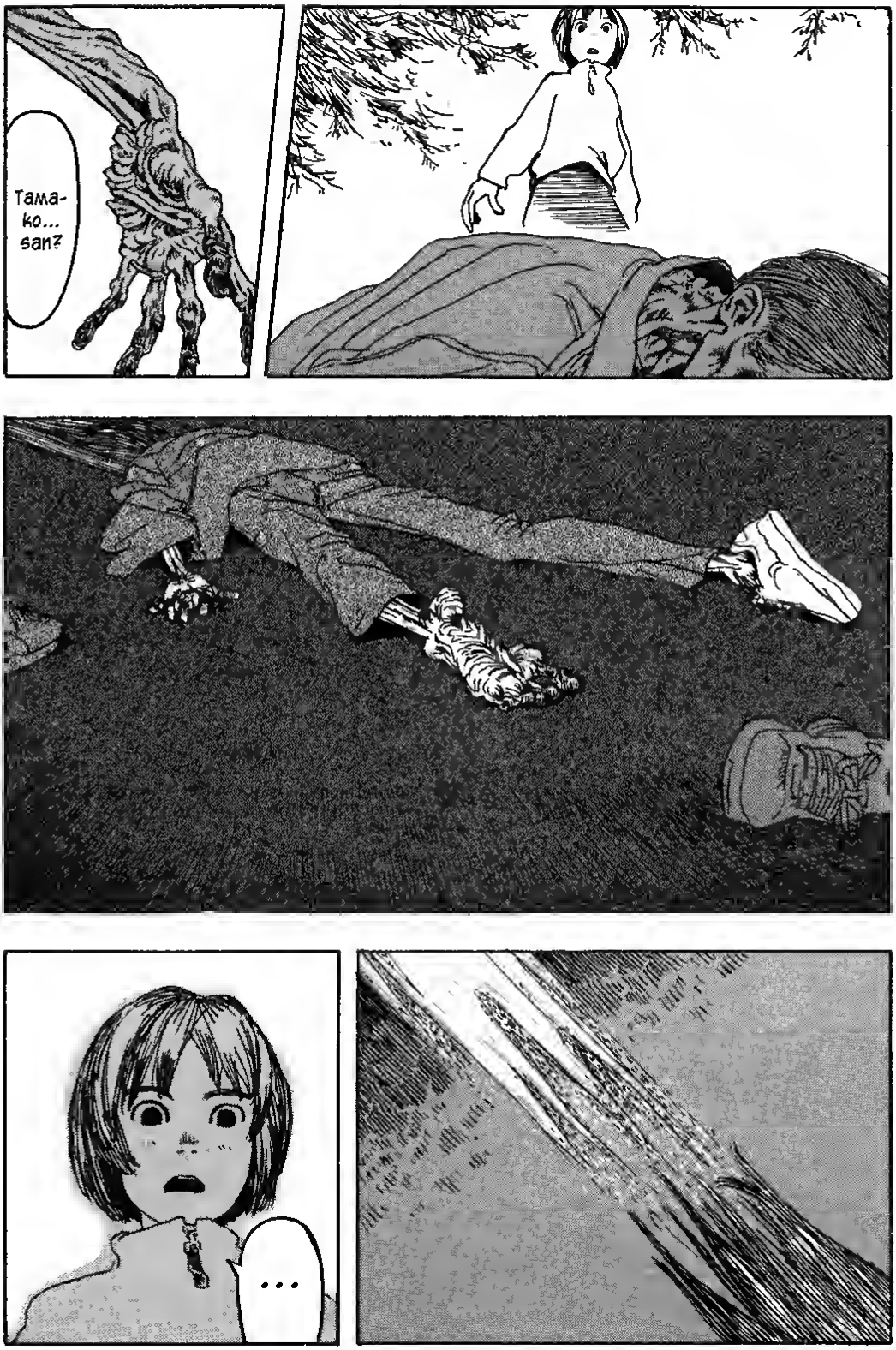
!
Itou-
san!!

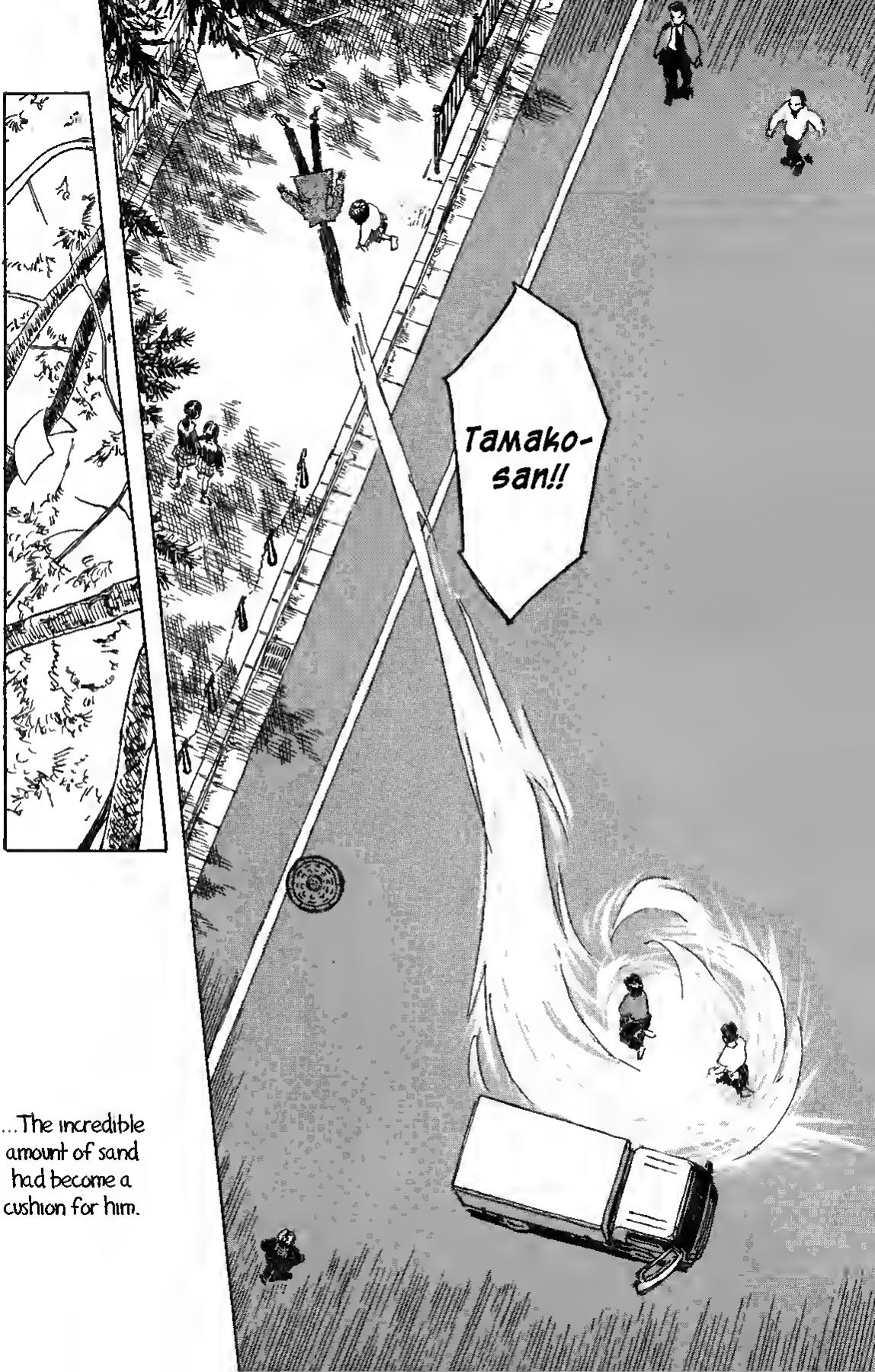
WOOSH


It looked like "light".
Glittering and basking in the sun,
it was just like a belt of light.
The "light" wrapped around Itou-san.
As if to cover him.
The sand rushed forth.

キイイイイイ
SKREEEEEE
!
Ah...
サラサラサラ
Itou-san!


Sand...
!
Itou-san...
ざあお…
FWSH…
Ow...
Huh?
Tamako-san!!


Tama-
ko...
san?
...

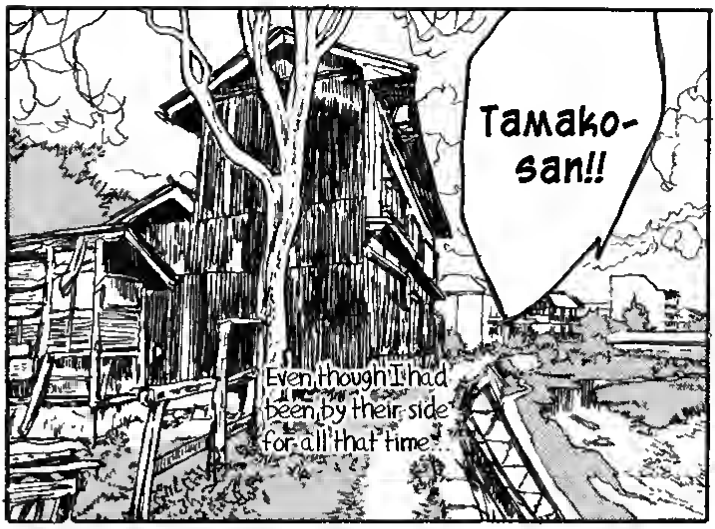


...The incredible amount of sand had become a cushion for him.

Itou-san got by with minor injuries.
...
It's going to take a lot of money for Tamako-san to get better, right?
...I'll get a job.
I'm gonna do it even if you don't want me to.
...
I've decided already.
I'll quit carrying the signboards around,
and have him let me work as a cabaret girl.

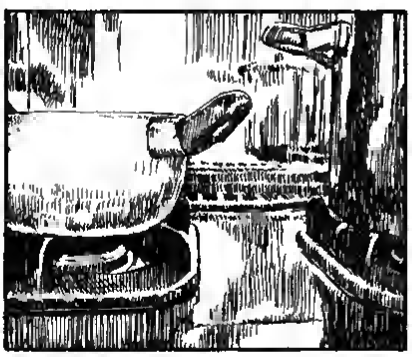
I... want to stay by her side.
...Hitomi-chan,
Could you get some of the things from the house that I'm going to need?
Like clothes and stuff...?
!
Yo.
I got a report a bit ago,
that a run-away would be coming over here...

Let's go.
Wait...
...Did Itou-san report this!?
The police...?
You're Kamasawa Hitomi, right? Your parents put out a police search request for you.
What ...?
...
What is he going to do about nursing?
What is Itou-san going to do by himself?
Why is this happening now...?
But...
Why...?
Let go of me!
What's going on?
Idiot!
Itou, you back-stabber ...
...Let me go!
This is stupid!
What is he think-ing!?
What about the money...?


Tamako-san!!
Even though I had been by their side for all that time...

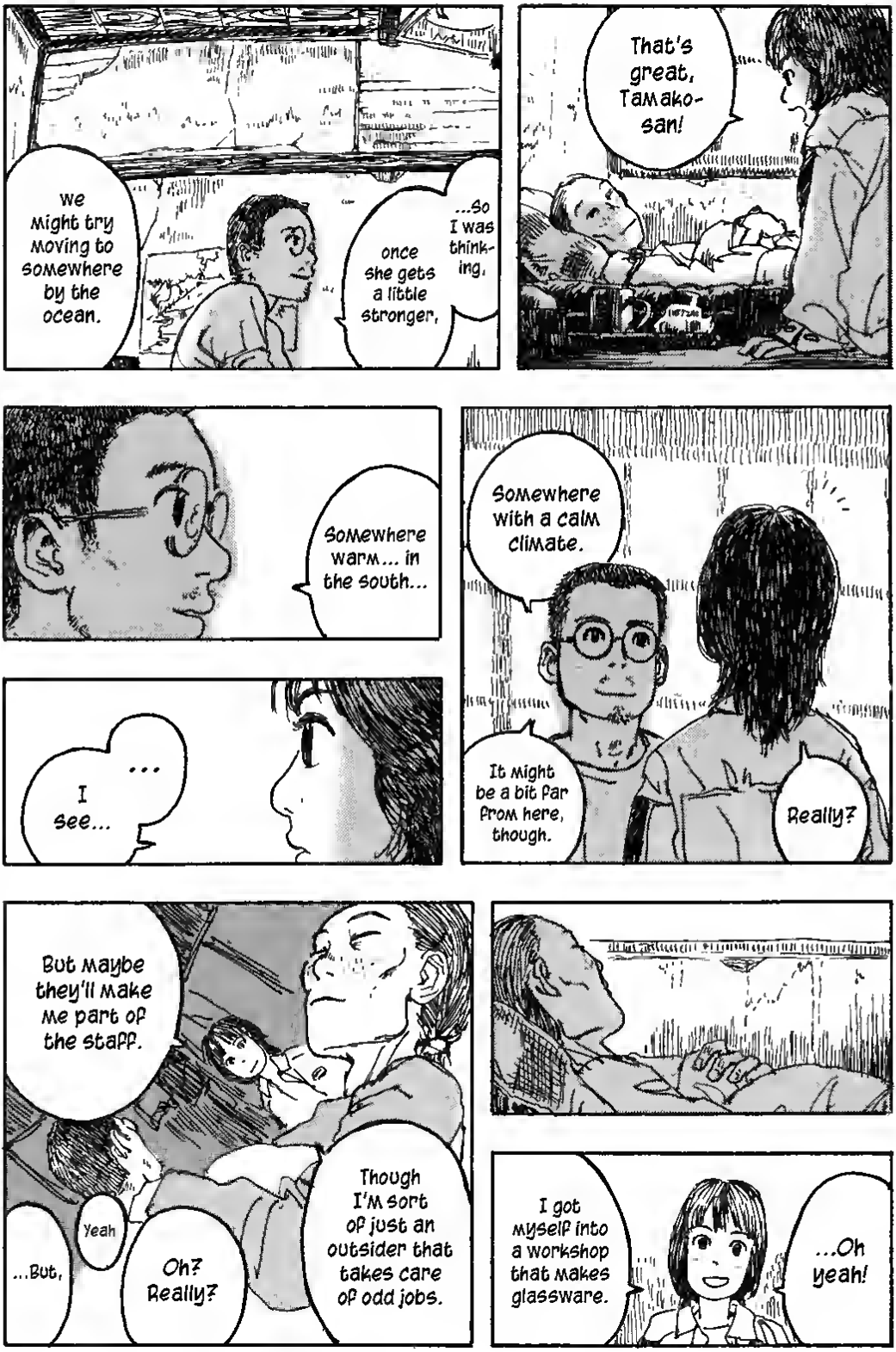
Tamako-san...

I was still... unable to do anything for them.



Hello!

Got some muscle on me now, right?
What do you think?
Two Years Later
I came over to play.
It's Hitomi.
I guess manual labor suits me.
Your skin's completely dark now!
My mind and body are both sound.
Oh.
She's got a pretty good appetite.
Recently there hasn't been much sand in Tamako-san's saliva.
I've got good news!


We might try moving to somewhere by the ocean.
...So I was thinking,
once she gets a little stronger,
That's great, Tamako-san!
Somewhere warm... in the south...
Somewhere with a calm climate.
It might be a bit far from here, though.
Really?
...
I see...
But maybe they'll make me part of the staff.
...But,
Yeah
Oh? Really?
Though I'm sort of just an outsider that takes care of odd jobs.
I got myself into a workshop that makes glassware.
...Oh yeah!

Why glass?
Hmm...
I wonder why...

End

Covered In Sand
Originally published in Afternoon 2000 August Issue.

Le Pain et Le Chat

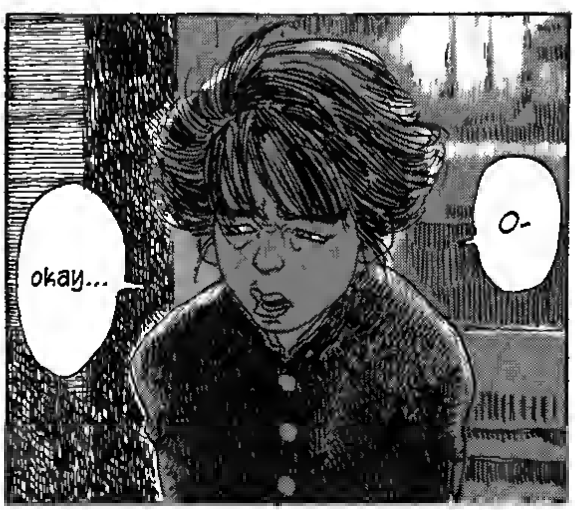
www.illuminati-manga.com
#illuminati-manga@irc.irchighway.net

Le Pain et Le Chat

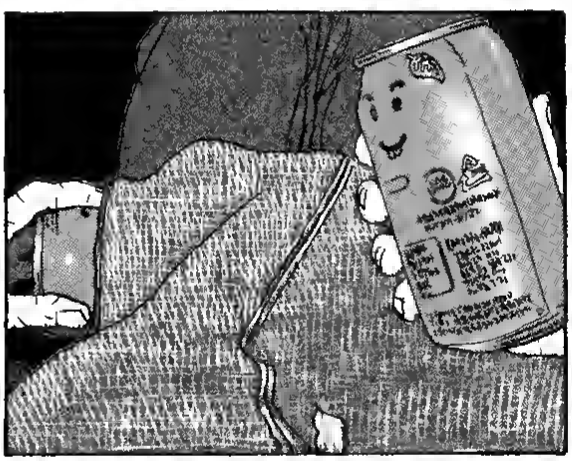
That's the trick to getting delicious bread.
"When you're rolling the dough, you want to have it stay supple like a young girl's skin."
Nyaa
Nyaa
was he French?
Nyaa
Nyaa
The person who said that...
Nyaa

DING DING
VOICE
For Military Use
slide
click

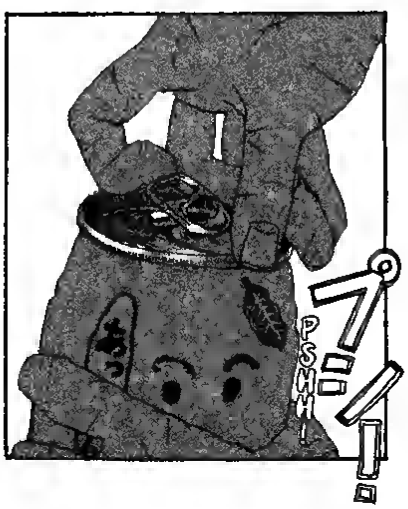
Say that you lost it.
You better not say that your wallet was stolen.

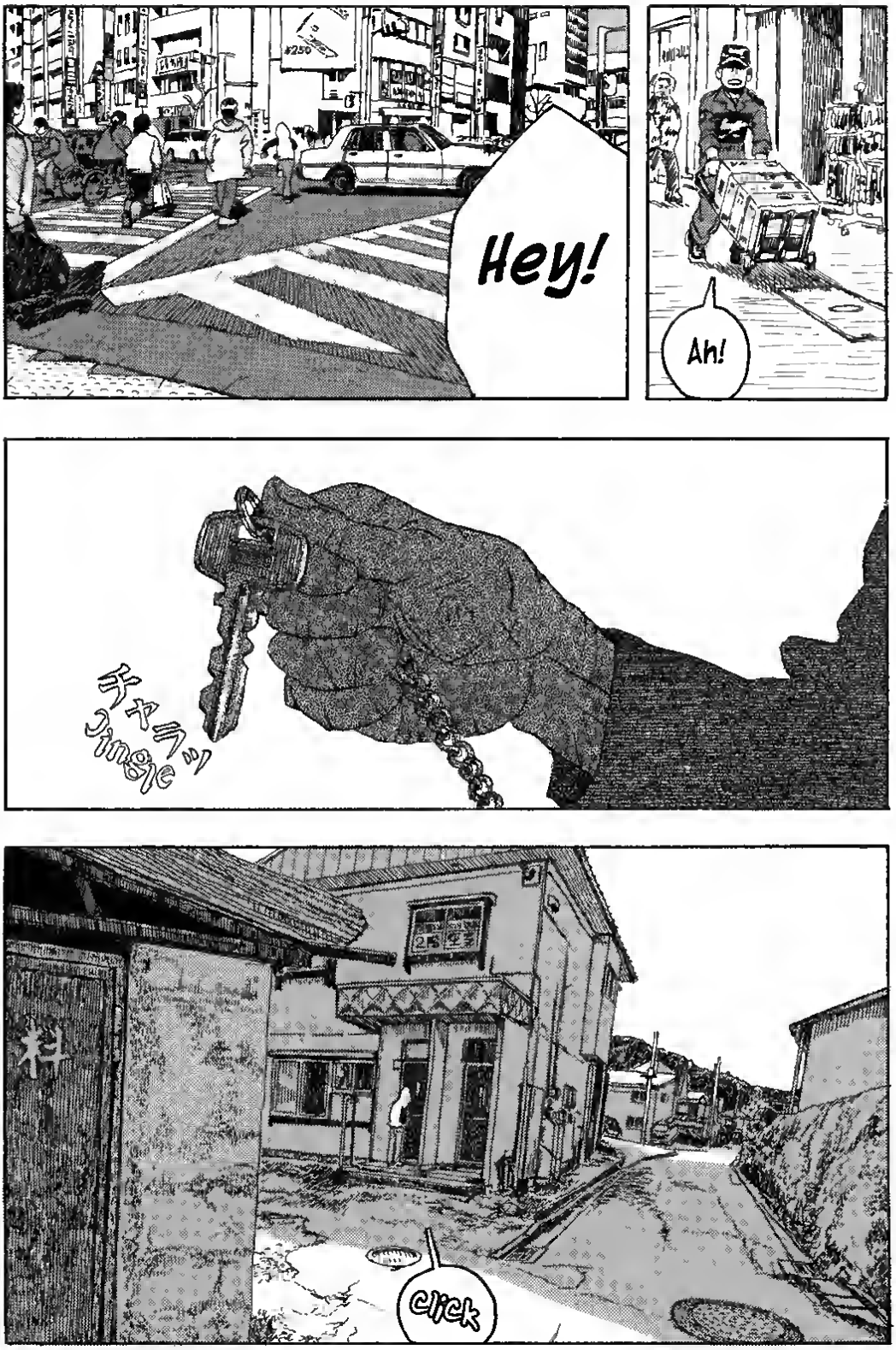

okay...
O-

Or else...

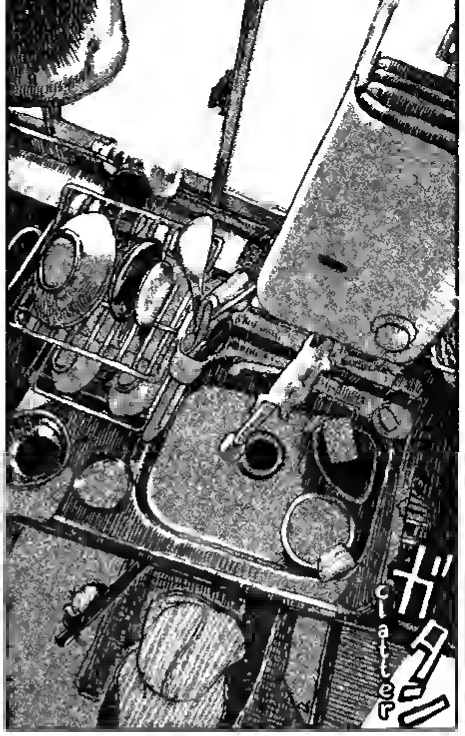


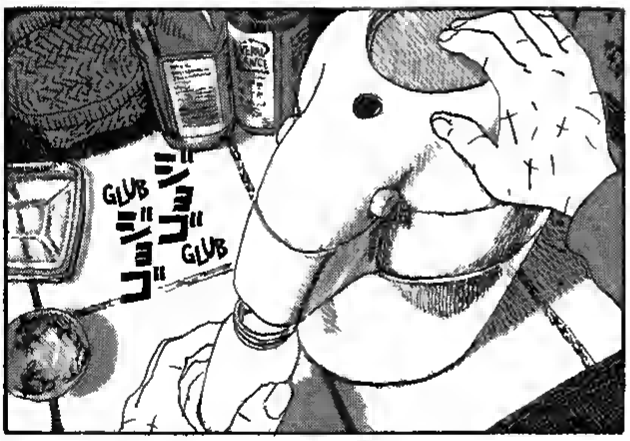
glug
glug
glug
glug


PSHH!


Hey!
Ah!
チャラッ
jingle
click

POP
パカ


ガタン
clatter

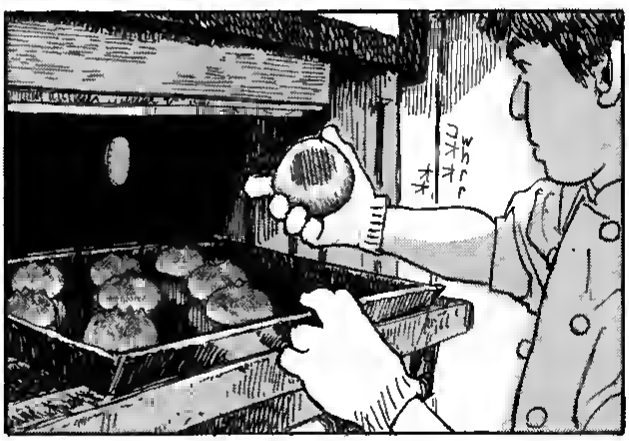

GLUB
ジョゴ
GLUB
ジョゴ
GLUB

tap
tap
120cc
100

シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake

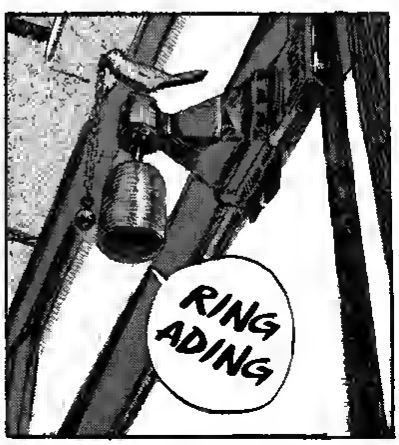
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake
シャカ
shake

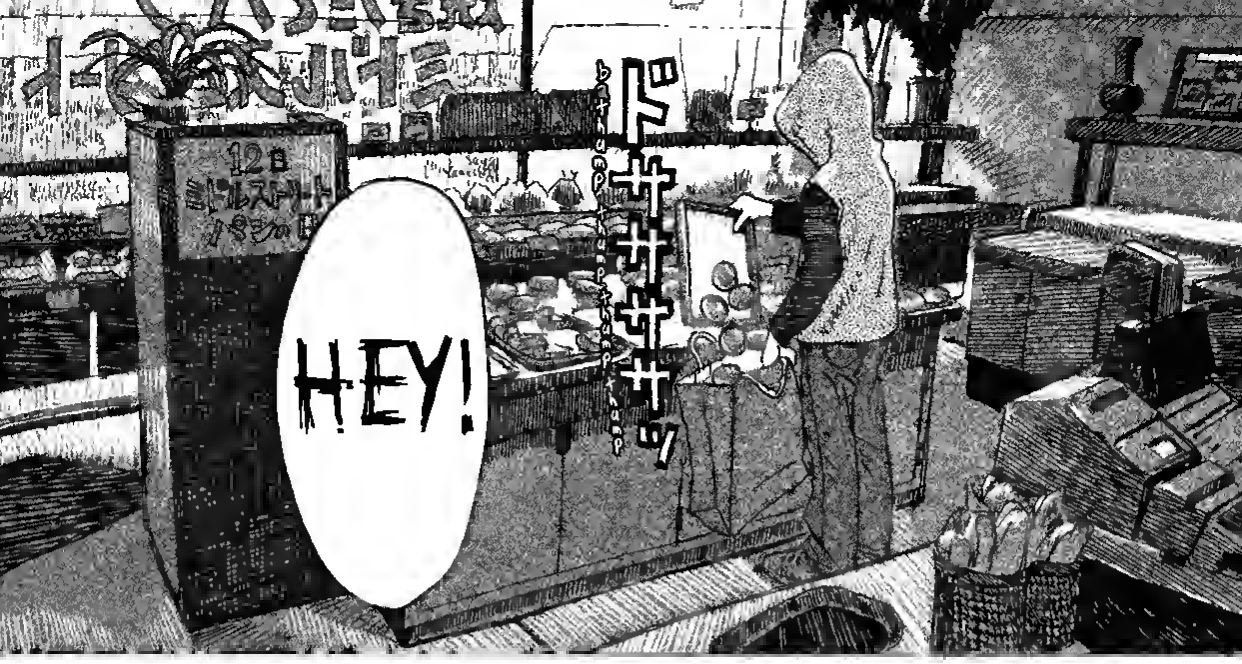
d-ing
...Sigh.

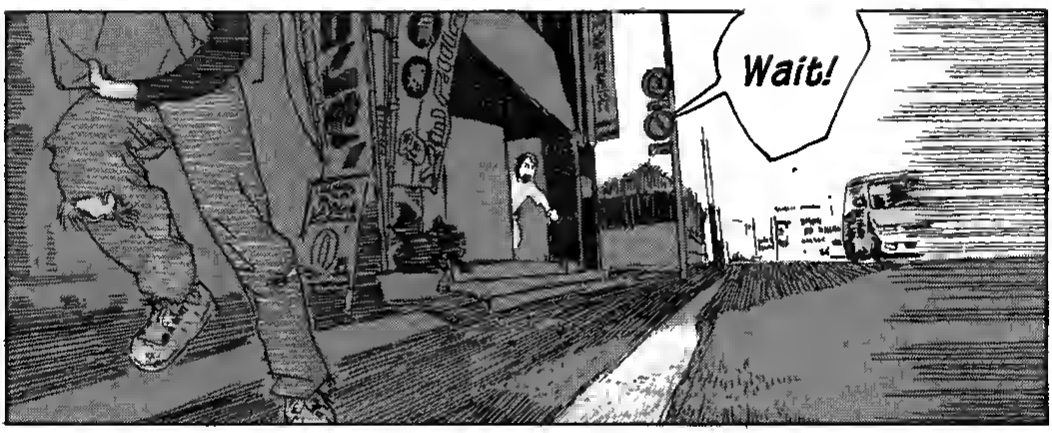


ガシャツ
kerchak

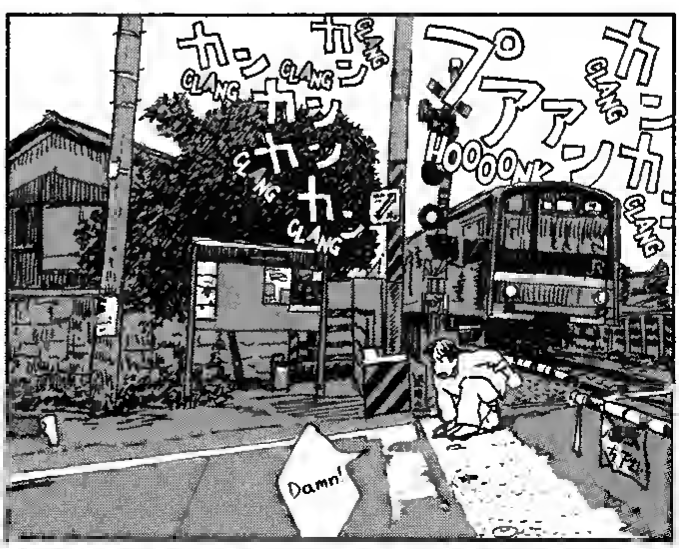
Welc...

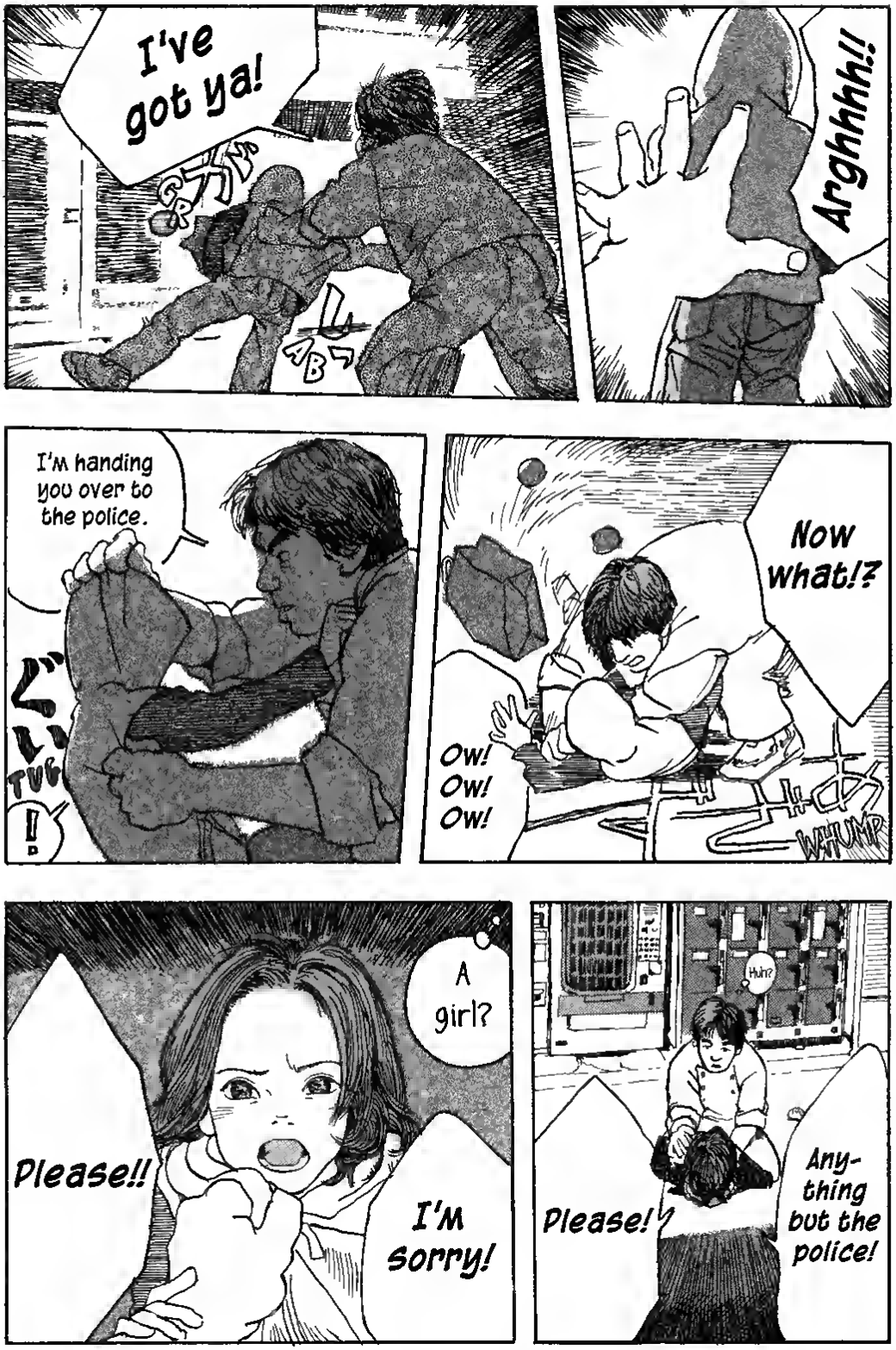

RING
ADING


HEY!


Wait!

Don't Mess With Meeee!

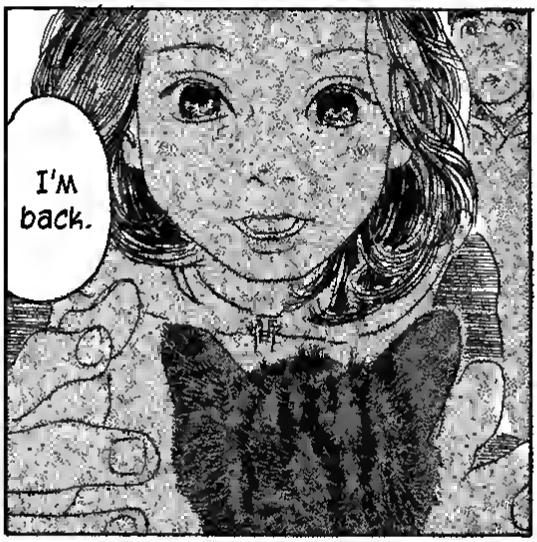

カン CLANG
カン CLANG
カン CLANG
カン CLANG
カン CLANG
プアーン HOOOONK
カン CLANG
カン CLANG
Damn!


I've got ya!
Arghhhh!!
I'm handing you over to the police.
TUG
Now what!?
Ow! Ow! Ow!
WHUMP
A girl?
Please!!
I'M sorry!
Huh?
Please!
Anything but the police!

Beat me up if you want!
Just don't take me to the police!
But, I promise!
I'll pay the money!
...I don't have any right now.
Those...
Please! I'm begging you!
...Hey, listen, you...
You're burning up...
It's not from running, is it?
That's awful...
Wounds... They're all swollen.

ガチャ
CLICK

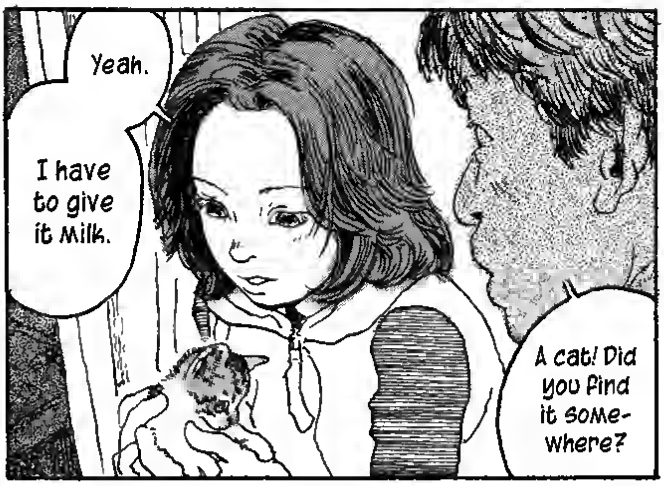
...Yeah.
Is this your house?


I'm back.

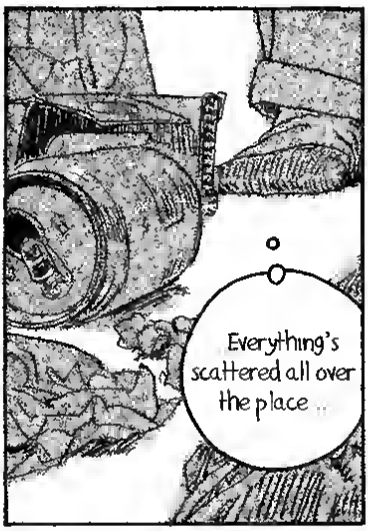
I'm home.

Myaa?

Wait there!


Yeah.
I have to give it Milk.
A cat! Did you find it some-where?

What's your name?
Ma-nami.
pop
パカ
Cat Milk

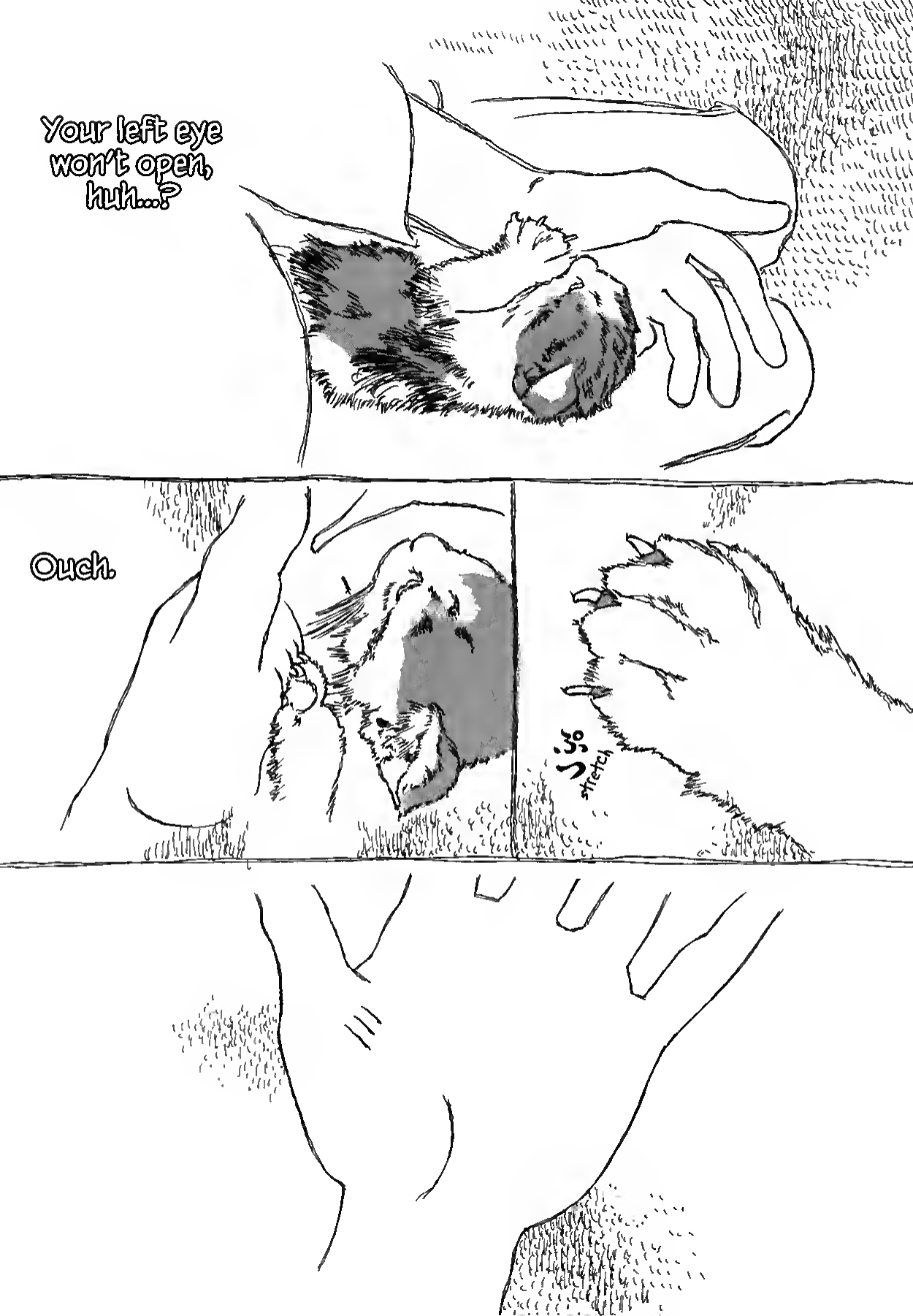

Everything's scattered all over the place ..

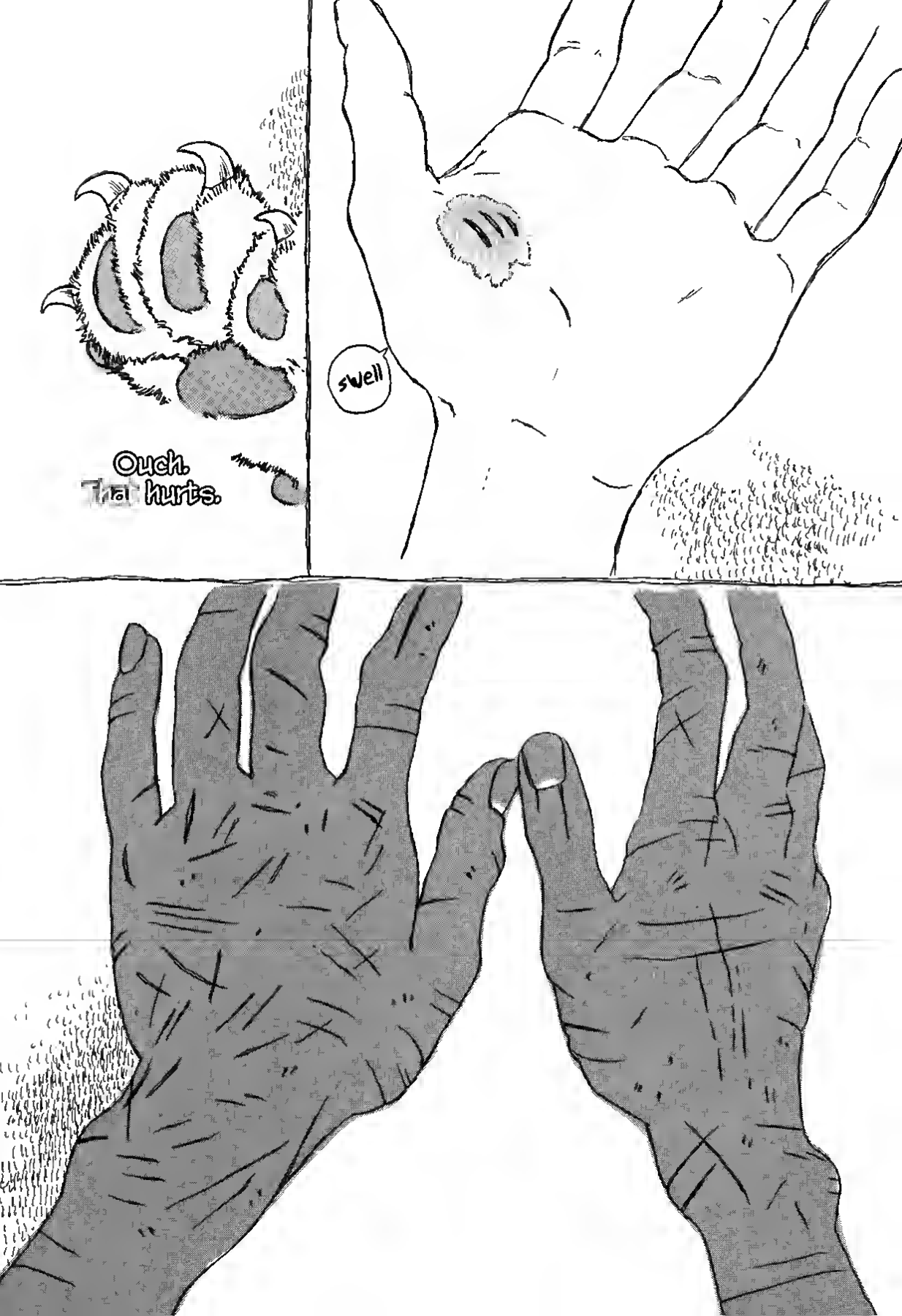
Hey, answer me hon-estly...
I really don't know!

When are your parents coming back?
I don't know.

What ...?
Here's your milk...
They haven't been back in a year.
...They just went away somewhere.
...Then, doesn't that mean...
...they're not going to come back...?
チュッ
チュッ
...
I know they are! They'll be back!
They're going to come back!

...Sorry I yelled...
I'm sorry...
...Of course they will.
WOBBLE
...
'cause you had to take care of the cat, huh? It would've ended up dying.
You didn't want to go to the police.
Are you okay!?
Hey!
Hey!!
ガタ..!
!


Your left eye won't open, huh...?
Ouch.
Um~ stretch

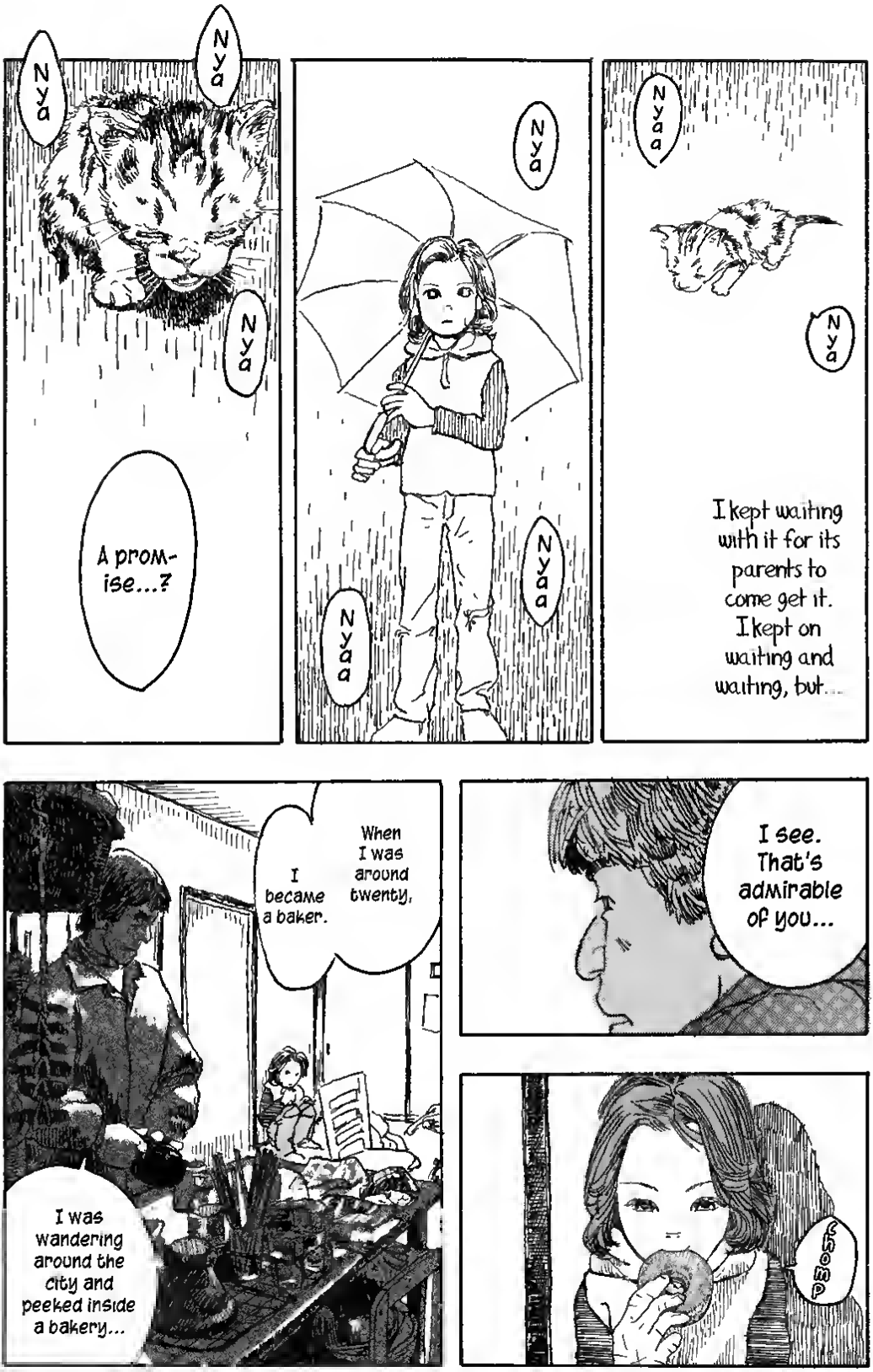

swell
Ouch.
That hurts.

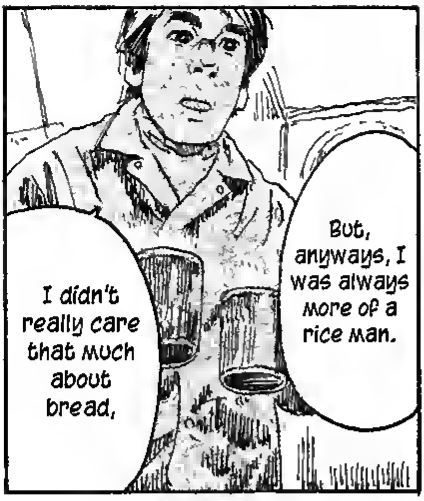
I just brought them over from the store.
Want some?
You awake now?
I thought I'd go buy some medicine too...
I won't charge you.

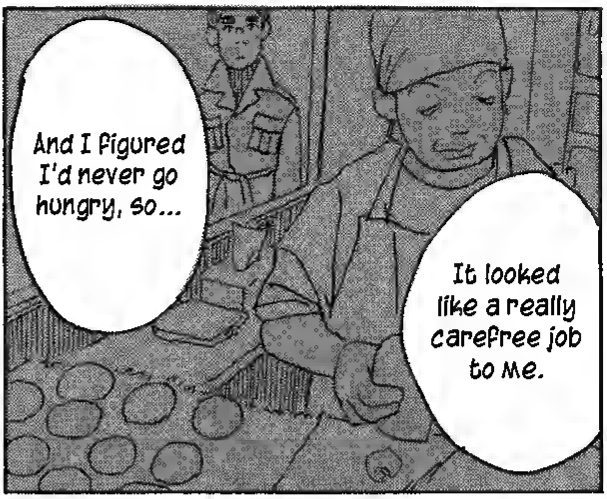
And it swelled up that much from it?
Did the cat scratch your hand up like that?
How long have you had the fever for?
A long time...
...You're probably allergic to cats.
Huh...?
Cat...
allergies?
Ever since... I picked it up...
I knew it.

and break out into fevers.
When cat hair gets into their systems,
they can't stop coughing or sneezing,
It seems pretty common.
My friend's kids have it too.
the only way is to not get so close to cats...
I think...
...How am I supposed to get better?
I don't wanna!
NO!
But if your hands are getting that swollen...
No! I don't wanna do that!

I wouldn't just get rid of it, later!
Shindyama
Akikazu
Aiko
Manami
I decided that I would take absolute responsibility for it!
When I found it I made a decision!
...That if I were just going to abandon it later, then...
A promise between me and it!
I made a promise!
While it still knew nothing..
Nyaa
Nyaa
Nyaa
ザアアアアア
TSSHHH
I should've just killed it from the very beginning.


Nya
Nya
Nya
A promise...?
Nya
Nyaa
Nyaa
Nyaa
Nya
I kept waiting with it for its parents to come get it. I kept on waiting and waiting, but...
I was wandering around the city and peeked inside a bakery...
I became a baker.
When I was around twenty,
I see. That's admirable of you...
Gosh


I didn't really care that much about bread,
But, anyways, I was always more of a rice man.


And I figured I'd never go hungry, so...
It looked like a really carefree job to me.

I've been dragging my feet, doing it half-heartedly...
There was no way I could just quit.

But... I opened the store and had debts to pay...
so I didn't like the work either.

...Okay, I under-stand.

got it way more together than I do.
...

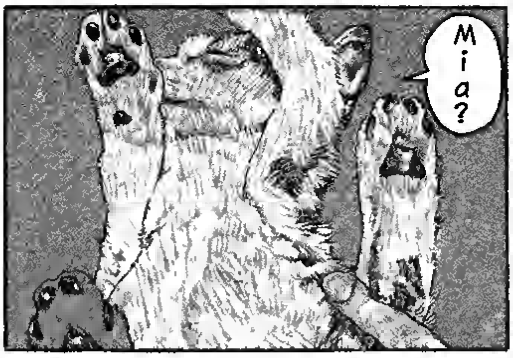
What the hell am I doing...?
You've...

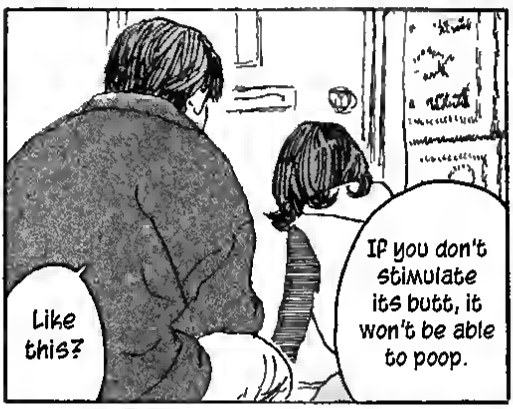
between you and me.
That's a promise
I won't get in the way of you two.
I'll respect your promise.
I'm going to take you to the doctor!
...However!
Yeah, that's right.
And it too... right?
I couldn't find her insurance card.
She's my friend's kid, I'm just watching her...
Do you have her insurance card?

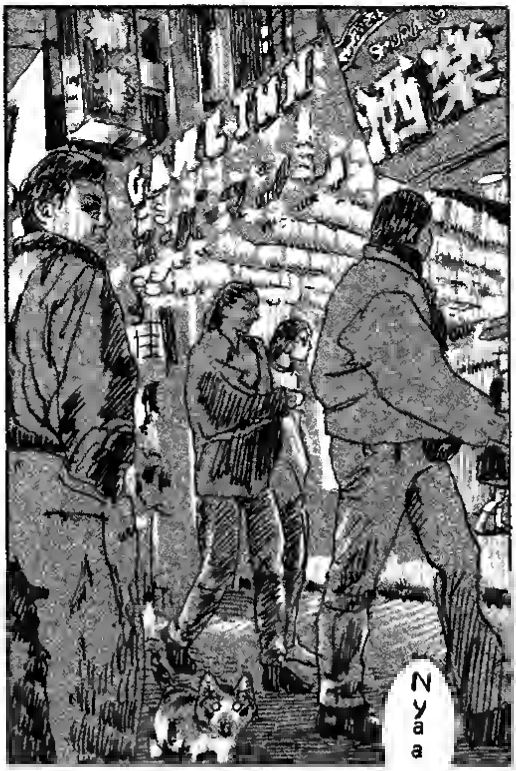
Even if you ask me to, I'm not allowed...
Hey, I guess you can't use mine, can you?
...She needs to be hospitalized!?
...
stare
Huh?
scribble
Fairly poor...
Also, the state of her nutrition is...
then her condition won't stabilize.
If we don't separate her from what's causing her allergies...

The patient's disappeared!
Doc-tor!
Hey! Whoa! I haven't been abusing her or anything!
Where did she...?
I won't let them hospitalize you,
or sepa-rate you two.
Okay, I get it!
Lazy stare
...

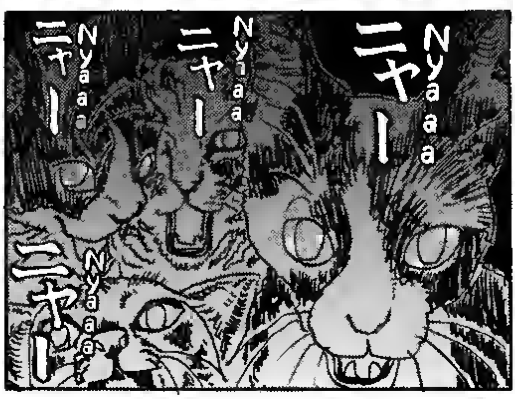
I'll keep my promise!
And maybe you ought to put on a gasmask too...
But for now, you better put these on.
Probably better than nothing.
...I looked it up at the library.
Wow, you're pretty intelligent...
You seem to know a lot about how to care for it.
Nyaaaa
CASINO


Mia?


If you don't stimulate its butt, it won't be able to poop.
Like this?


酒菜
Nyaa

Nyaaa
Nyaaa

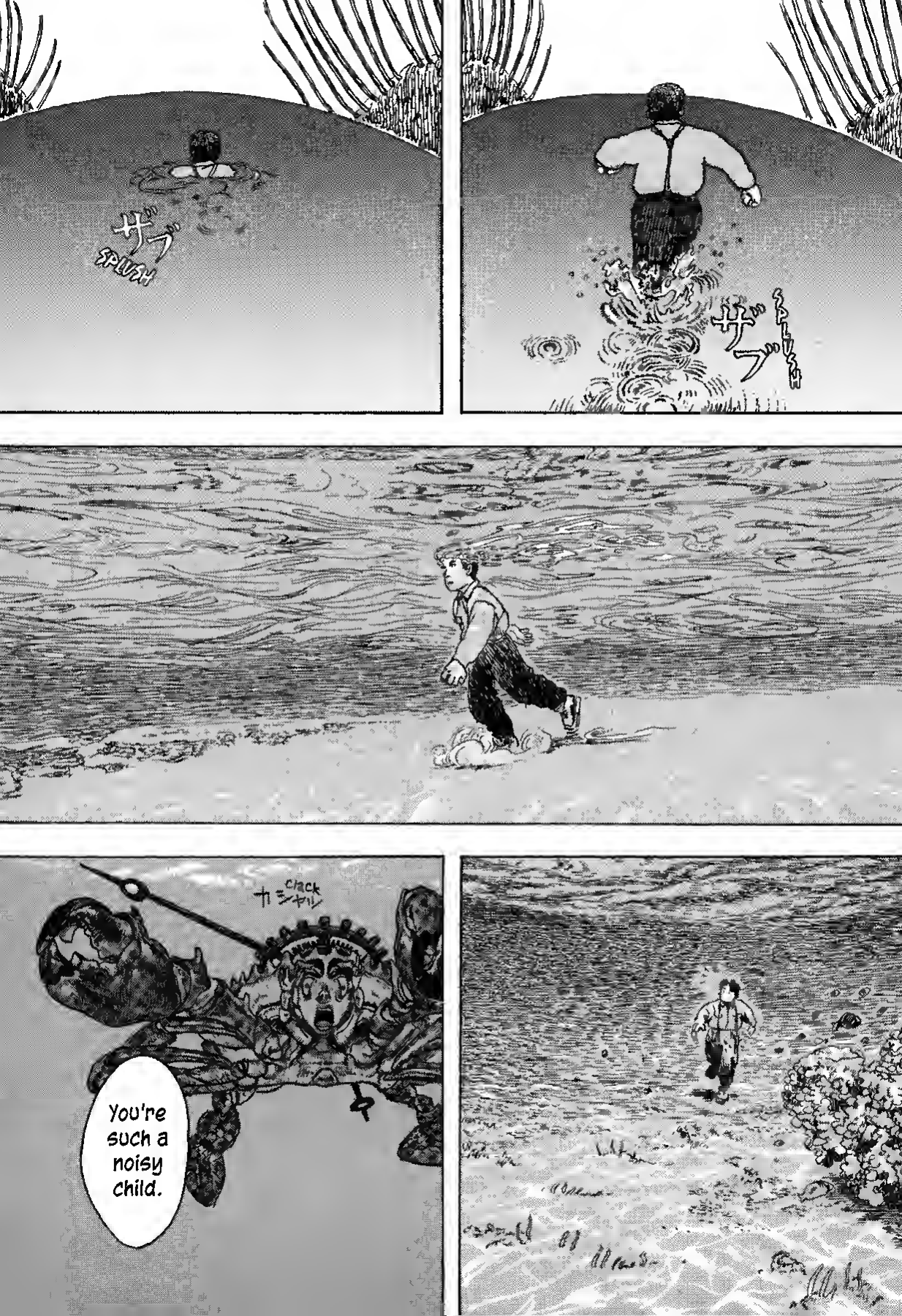

Nyaaa
ニャー
Nyaaa
ニャー
Nyaaa
ニャー

Nyaa
Nyaa
Nyaa

All right! It's pooping!

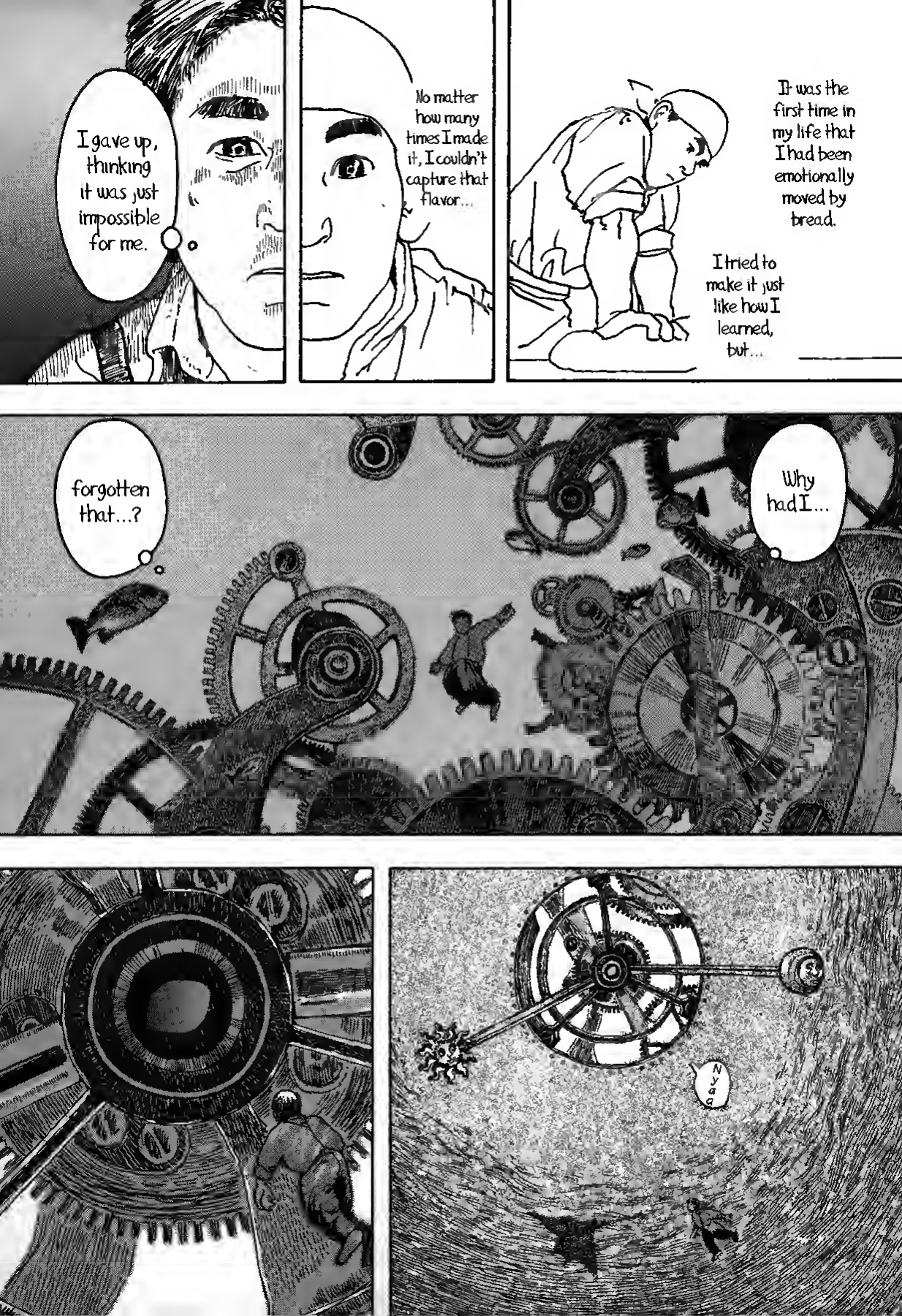
I... wanted to eat it again...
Not really... It was just super tasty, so...
What, are you hungry?
...Hey, is there anymore bread left?
I'm sorry... for stealing the bread...
Uhm...
Then... I'll bring some tomorrow for you.
R-Really?
Hey, you...
suddenly ...?
What's this all about...
...for every-thing...
Thanks

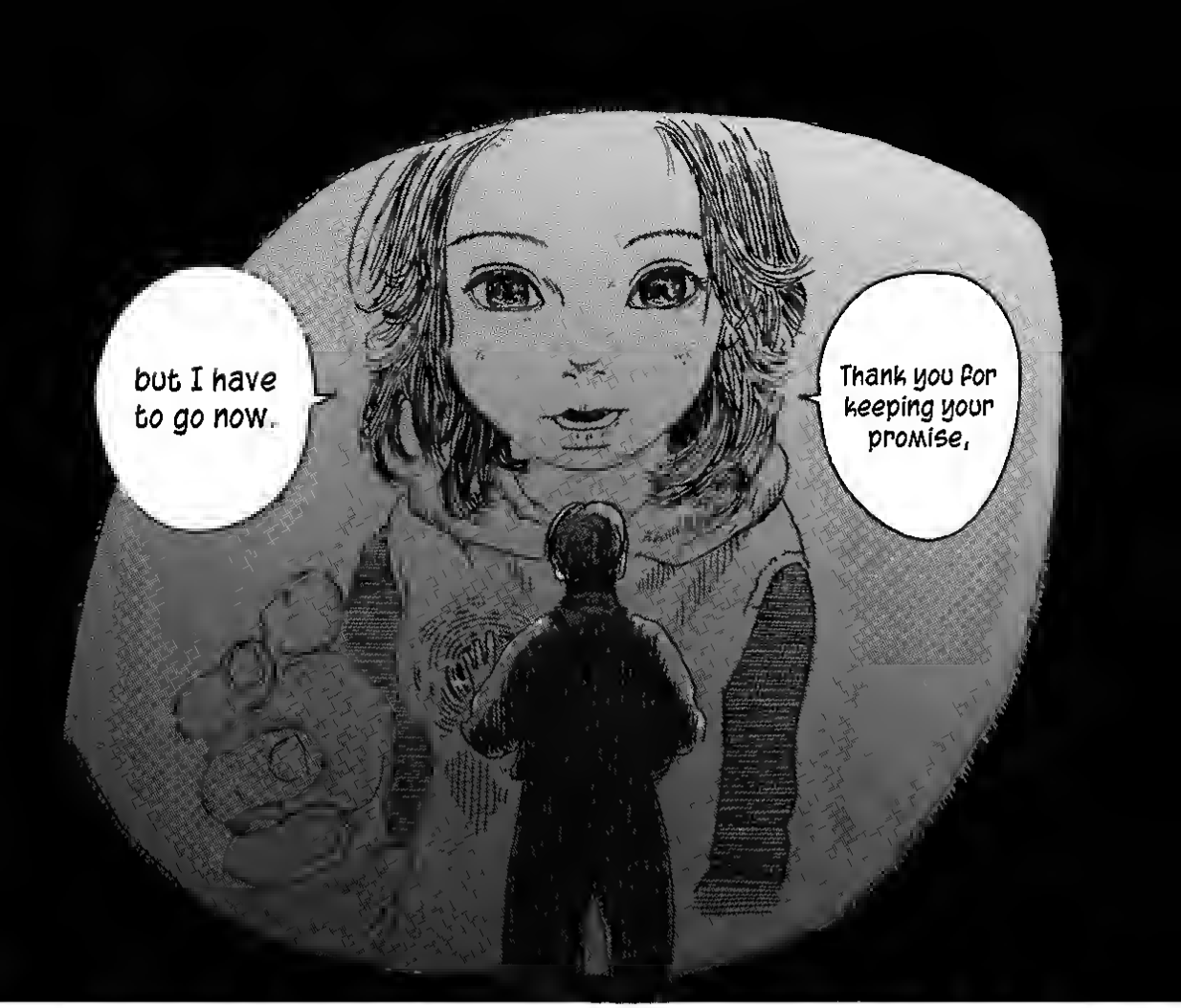
watery...
Your eyes are really...
Your fever's gone up again!


ザブ
SPLASH
ザブ
ざぶざぶ
ニヤリ
Clack
You're such a noisy child.

You're in the way! Move!
click
Why don't you just go look it up at the library?
You're so irritating!
click
wahh
wahh
wahh
wahh
retrrrr
retrrrr
retrrrr

wahh
wahh
Wasss!
In other words, you can tell if the bread is good or bad by how it looks
me...
That's
Yeah,
that bread...
To make beautiful bread, you need...
I had some bread that this French man made
That's right. Before I started working alone, I participated in a bread workshop
...it was so amazingly delicious


I gave up, thinking it was just impossible for me.
No matter how many times I made it, I couldn't capture that flavor...
It was the first time in my life that I had been emotionally moved by bread.
I tried to make it just like how I learned, but...
forgotten that...?
Why had I...
Nyaa

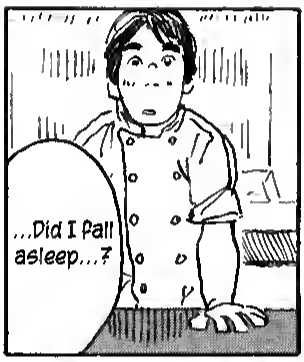

but I have to go now.
Thank you for keeping your promise,

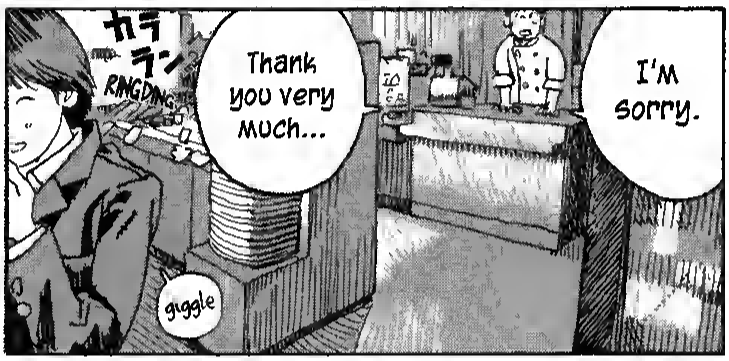
The kitties have told me...

I won't be able to stay with it.
that if I don't run away,
but... it doesn't matter anymore.
I wanted to protect this house,
nyaa
nya
sygg...
This little guy's more important to me.
Nyaa

Hrm?
Excuse me...

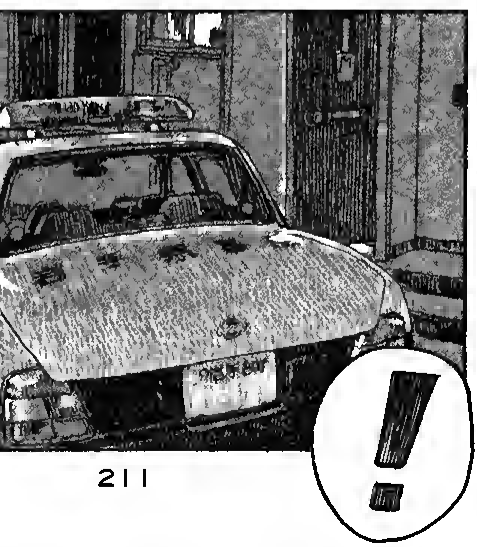
zzz
...se me.


...Did I fall asleep...?


カラン
RINGDING
Thank you very much...
I'm sorry.
giggle

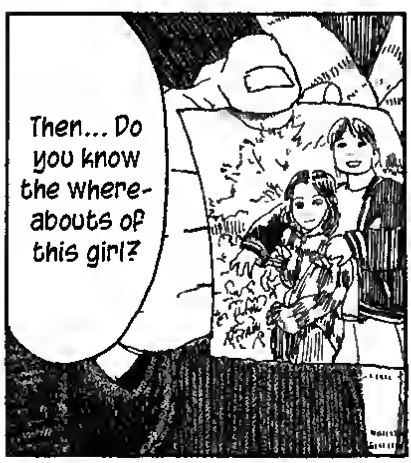
Hm?

...That was a strange dream...
燃料


!

What's going on here!?
kerchak
ガチャッ

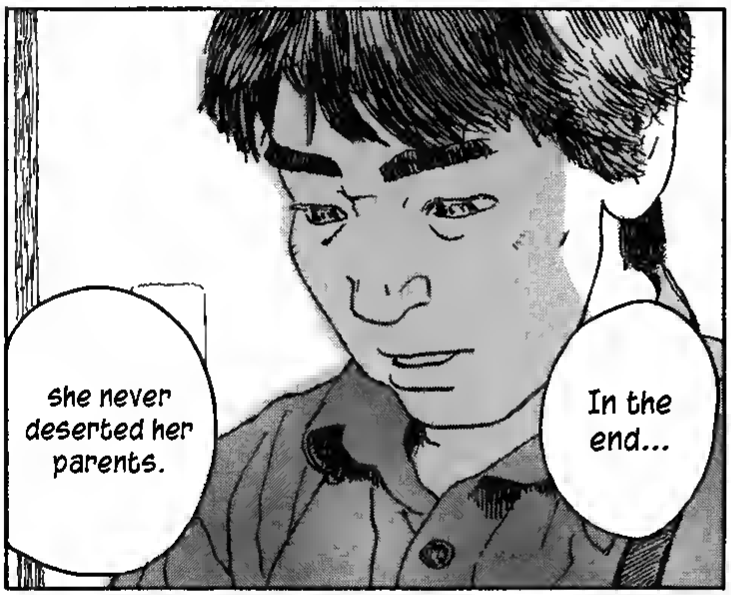
Who are you?
!

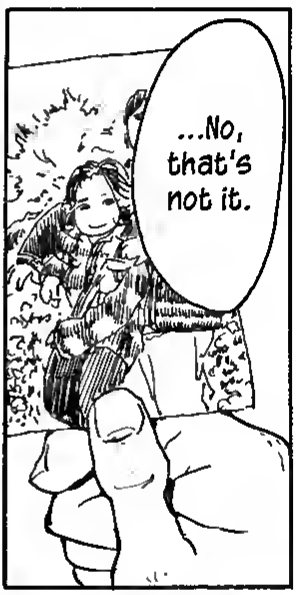

Then... Do you know the whereabouts of this girl?

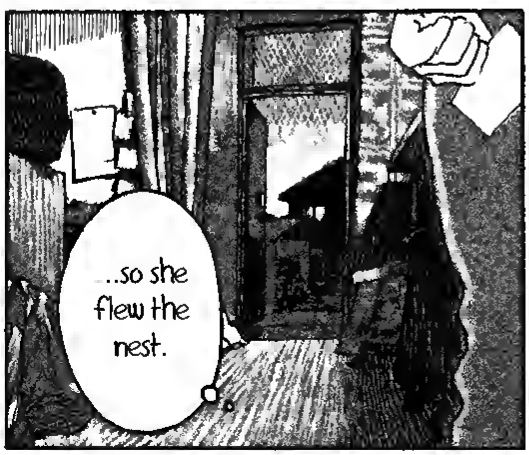
Did something happen?
U- uhm... I'm a friend...

...
to rob people with.
She's even used a knife,
Shoplifting, extortion, theft...
Huh?
she has continued to pay the rent,
and that probably made her life a lot tougher.
But...
Yamakishi Children's Consultation Center
Consultant Fujisawa Miki
2-18-1
It seems like her parents haven't been around for a while...
did all of those things to pay the rent?
Then, she...
so the landlord never noticed that her parents weren't around...

She must not have wanted to accept that she was abandoned.
~sniff
She was trying to protect the place where her parents would return to...

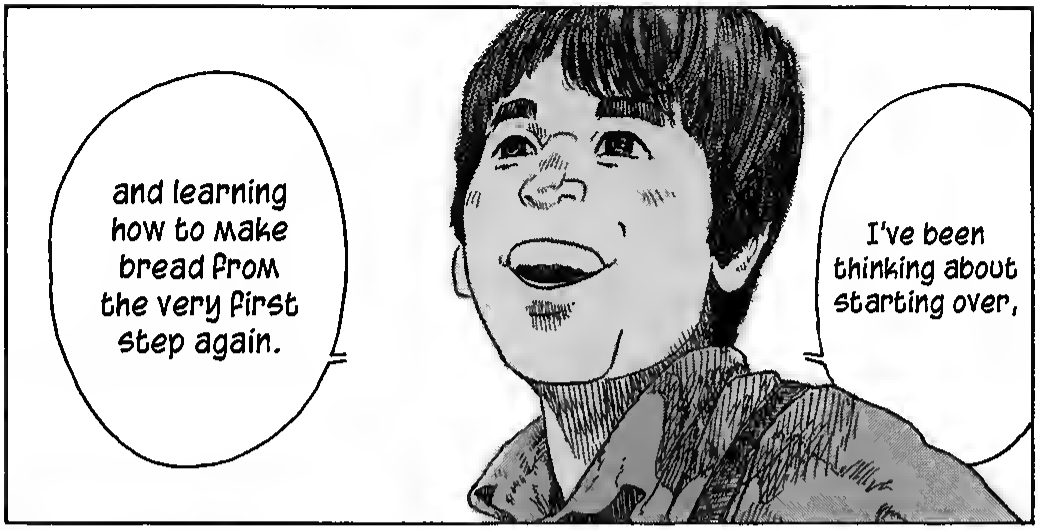

she never deserted her parents.
In the end...

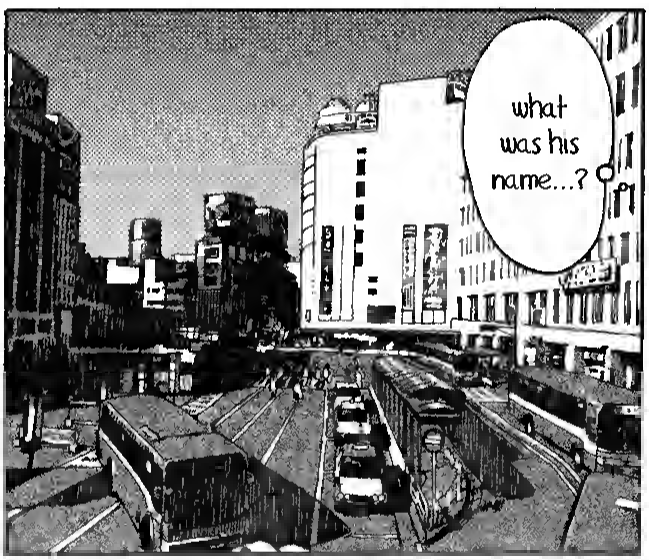

...No, that's not it.


...so she flew the nest.

something new to protect...
But she found...

Excuse me...
Hachoo!
Bless you.
allergic to cats?
...Yes that's right...
There's just so much dander floating around in this room...
Do you happen to be...
I want to hear your honest opinions about it afterwards, though.
I baked it because I wanted someone to eat it. Why don't you try some?
Take this bread.
...Hmm.
I see...


I've been thinking about starting over,
and learning how to make bread from the very first step again.


what was his name...?

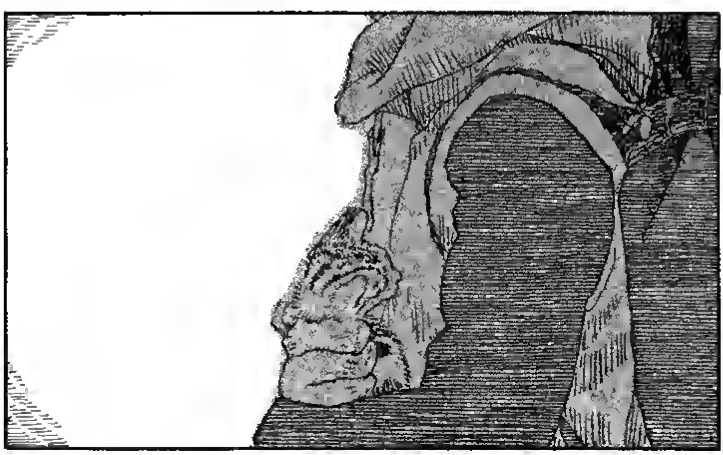
Don't worry, it's not poisoned or anything.
I see.
...That French man...

...I'll kill you...

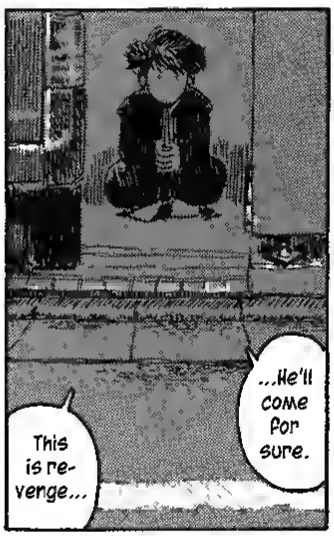
and lowered my allow-ance.
that they got angry at me
MUTTER
MUTTER
MUTTER
It's all his fault

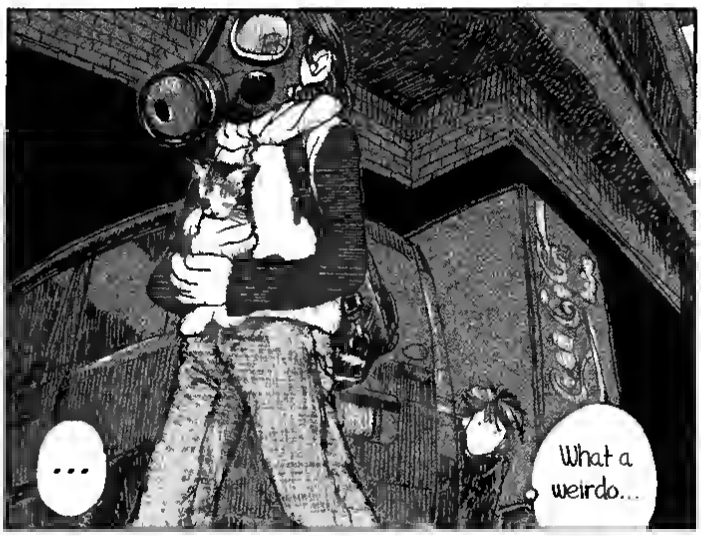
Myaa

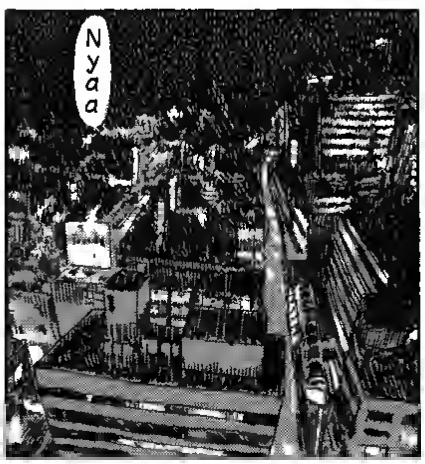
I'm sure he'll show up around here again.
I'll have my revenge...



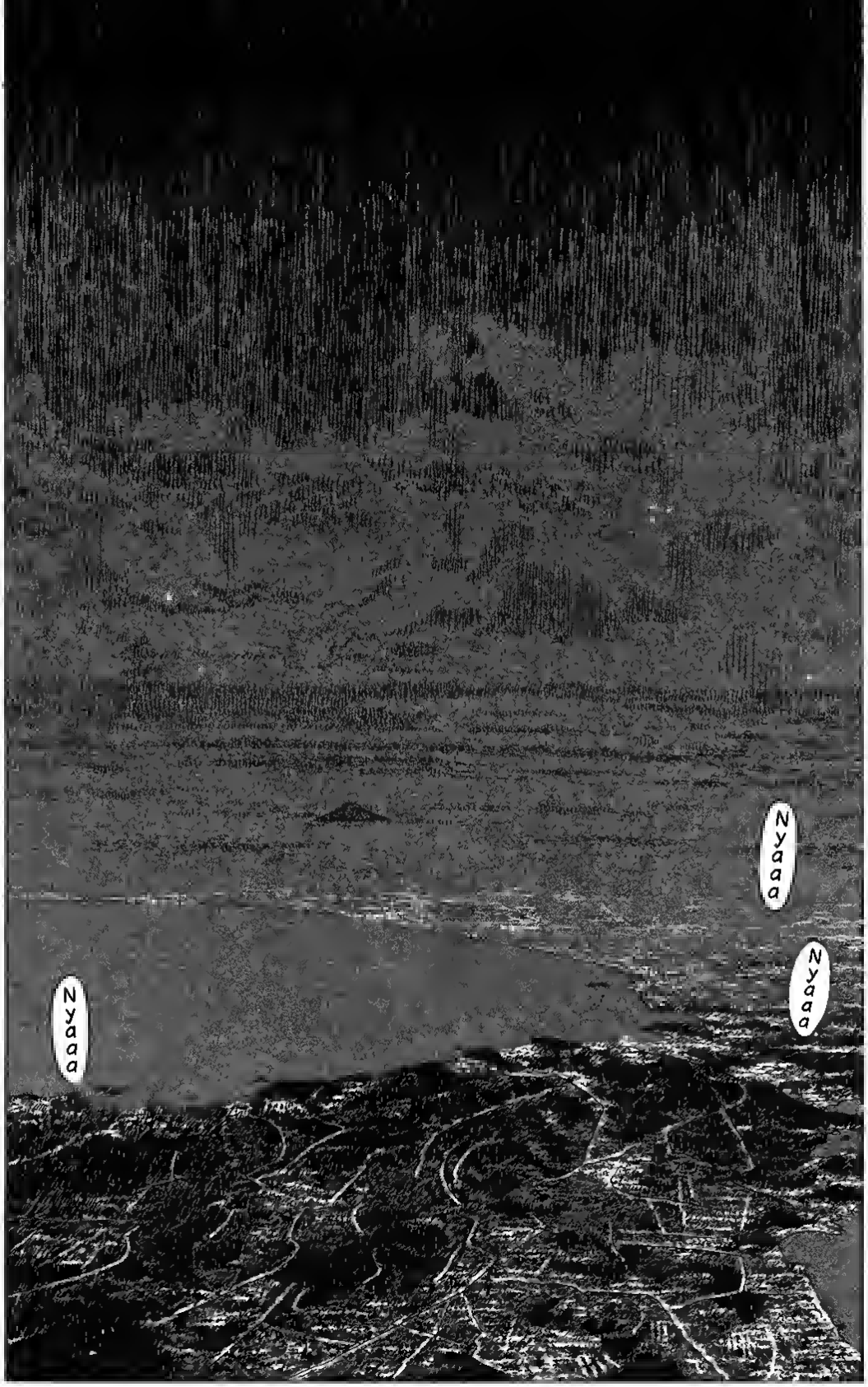
...

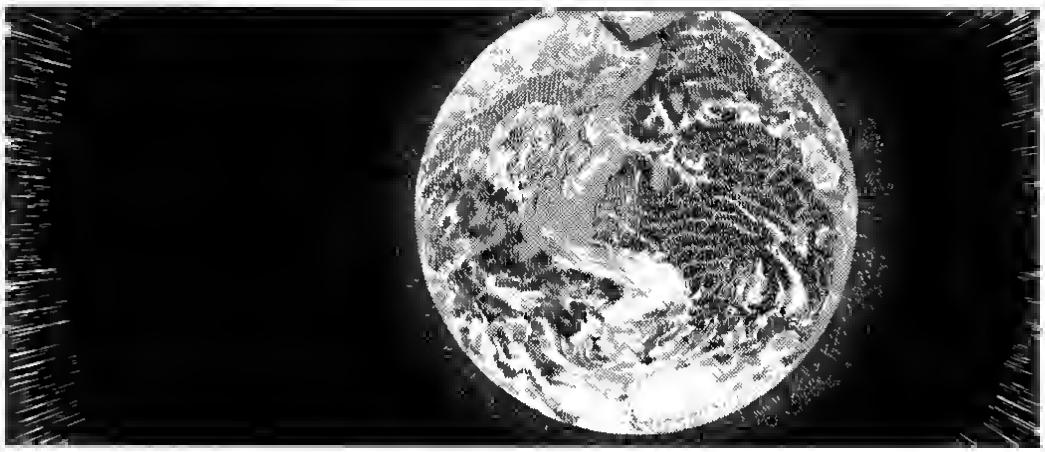

This is revenge...
...He'll come for sure.

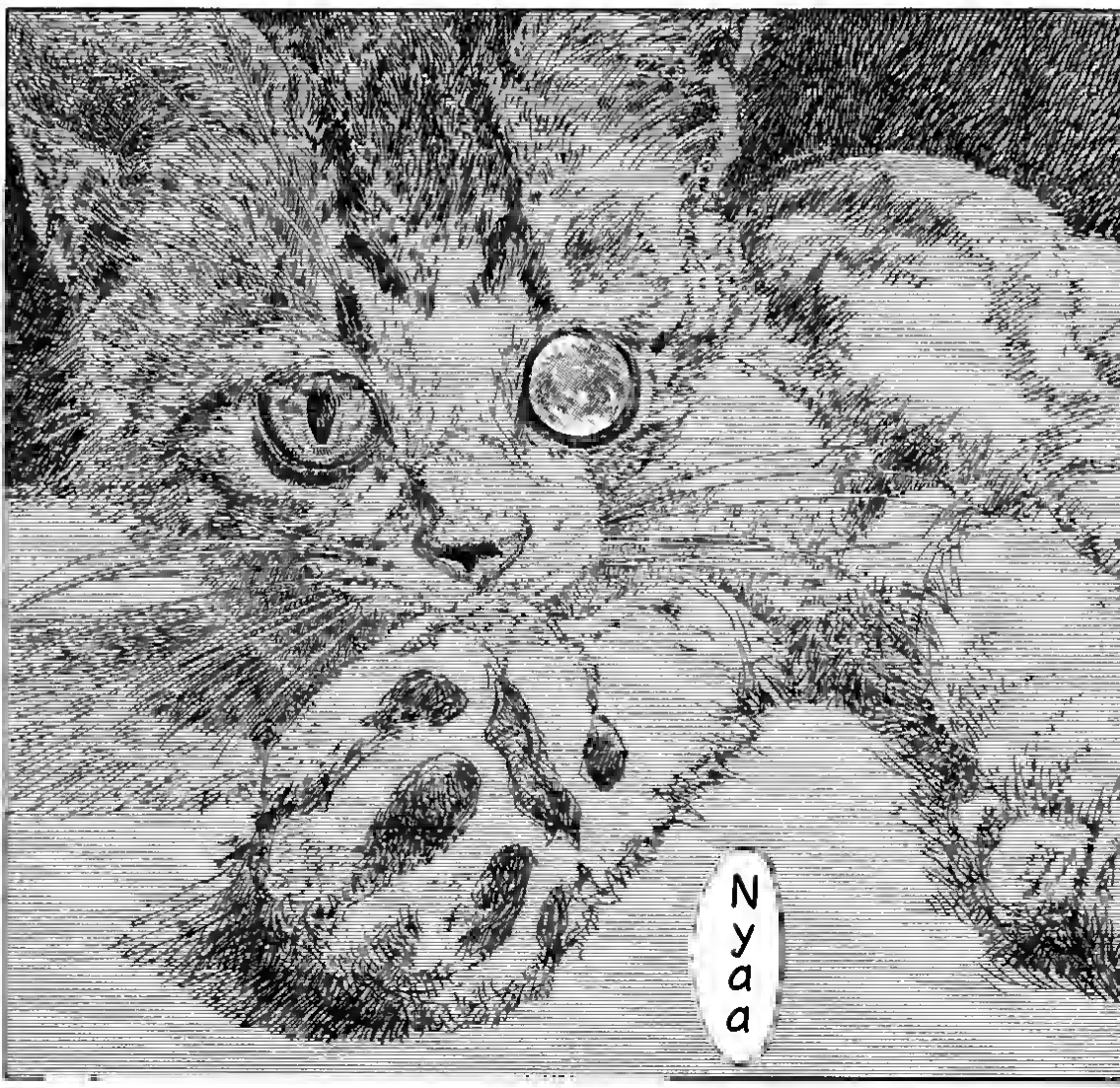

...
What a weirdo...


Nyaa

...Maybe I should just go home already.


Nyaaa
Nyaaa
Nyaaa




Nyaa

End

Le Pain et Le Chat
First published in Afternoon 2002 June issue

Still Winter

www.illuminati-manga.com
#illuminati-manga@irc.irchighway.net

Still Winter

Hey, grandpa,
if I climbed up to the top of that mountain, do you think I'd be able to see above the clouds?
I wanna try to get up there.
...
Listen, Hiro-nobu,
that mountain belongs to god.

THE FAINT SOUND THAT BLENDED INTO THE WIND TOOK HOLD OF THE MAN.
It's snowing...
It's not for man to climb.
What? But...
Oh!

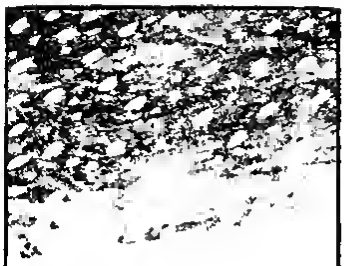
"Is it the chattering from a faraway forest,"

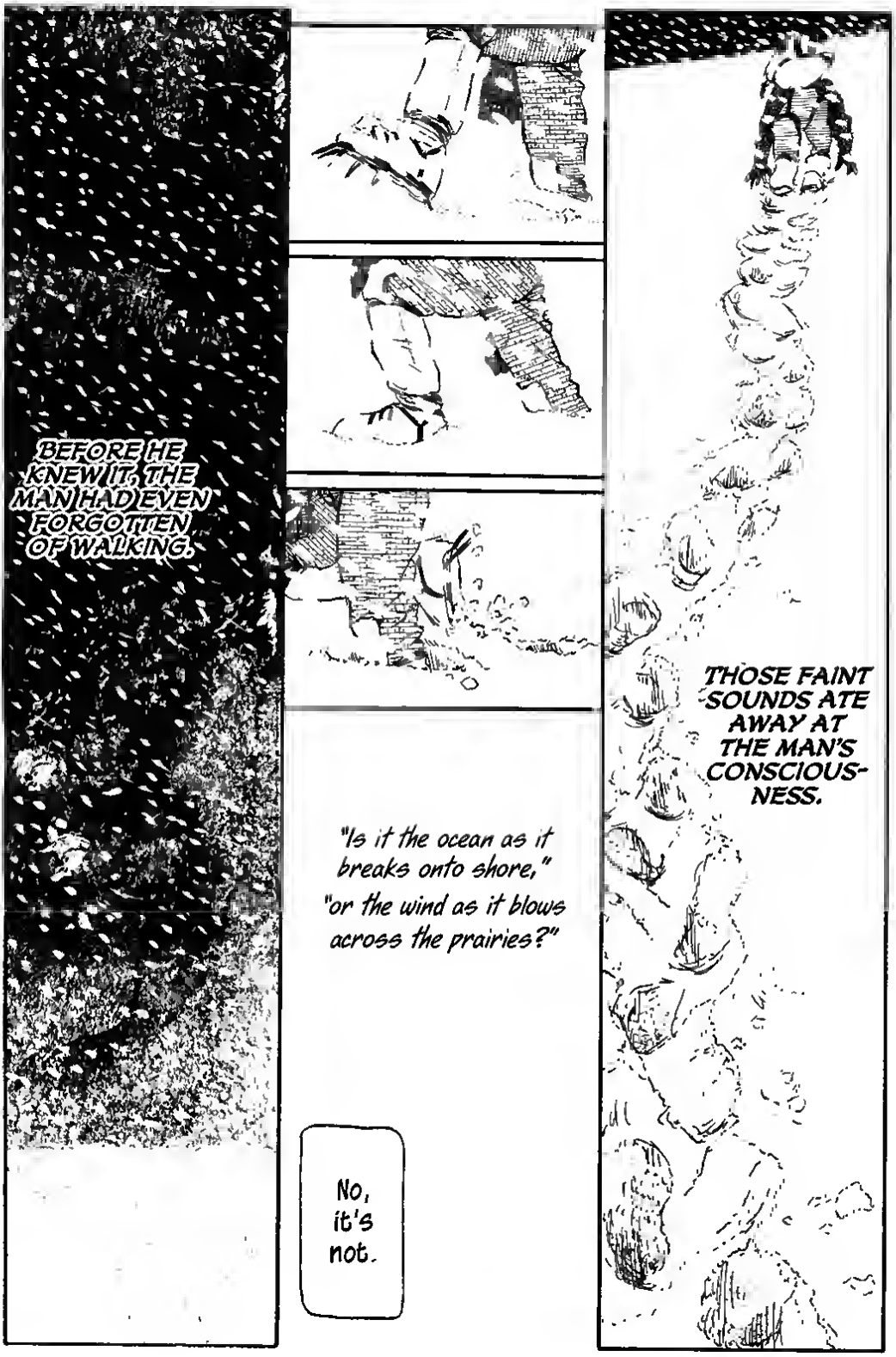
"or the murmuring of a small brook?"

No, it's not.

"What could that sound be...?"

"I've heard it somewhere before..."

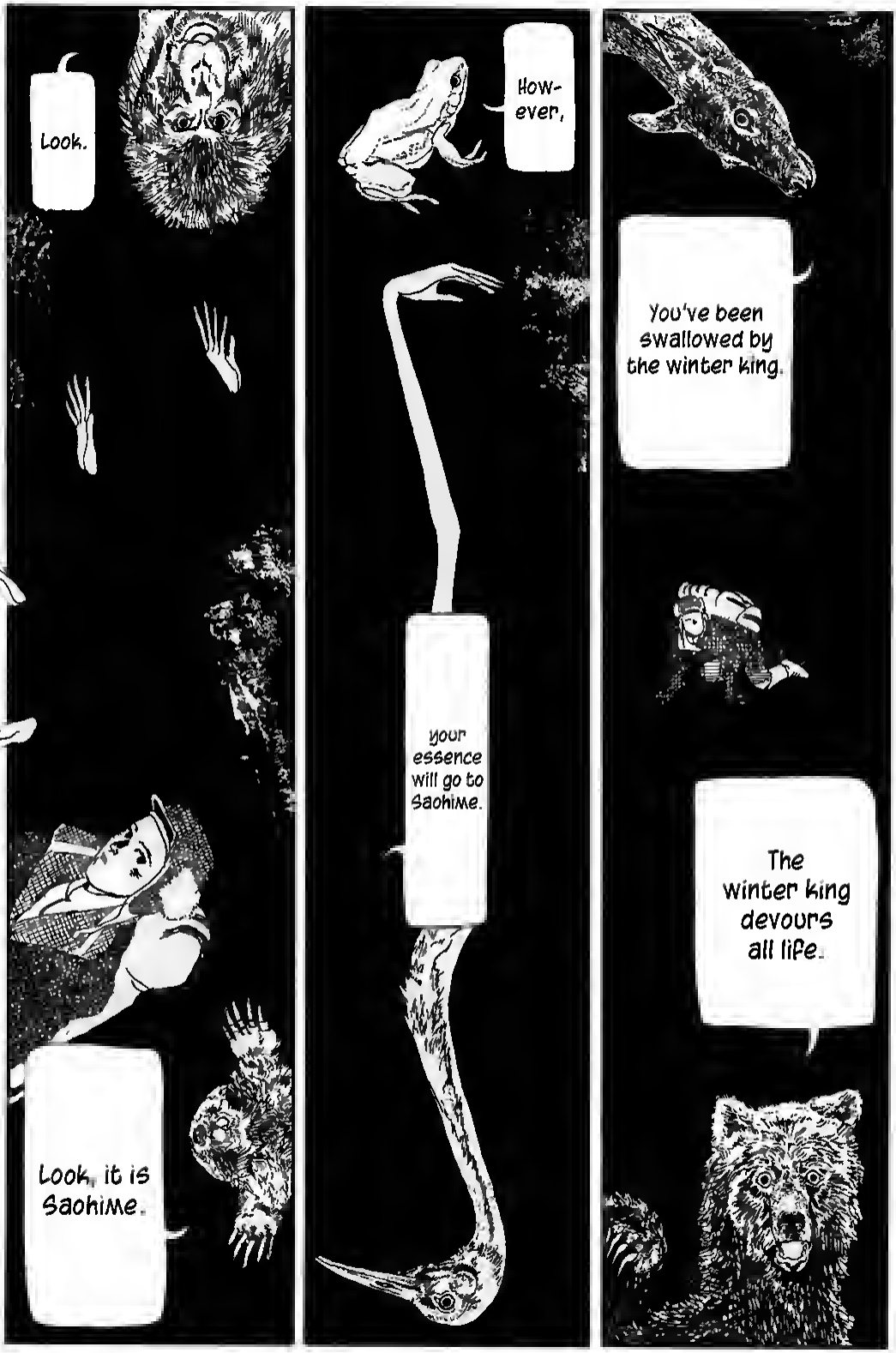


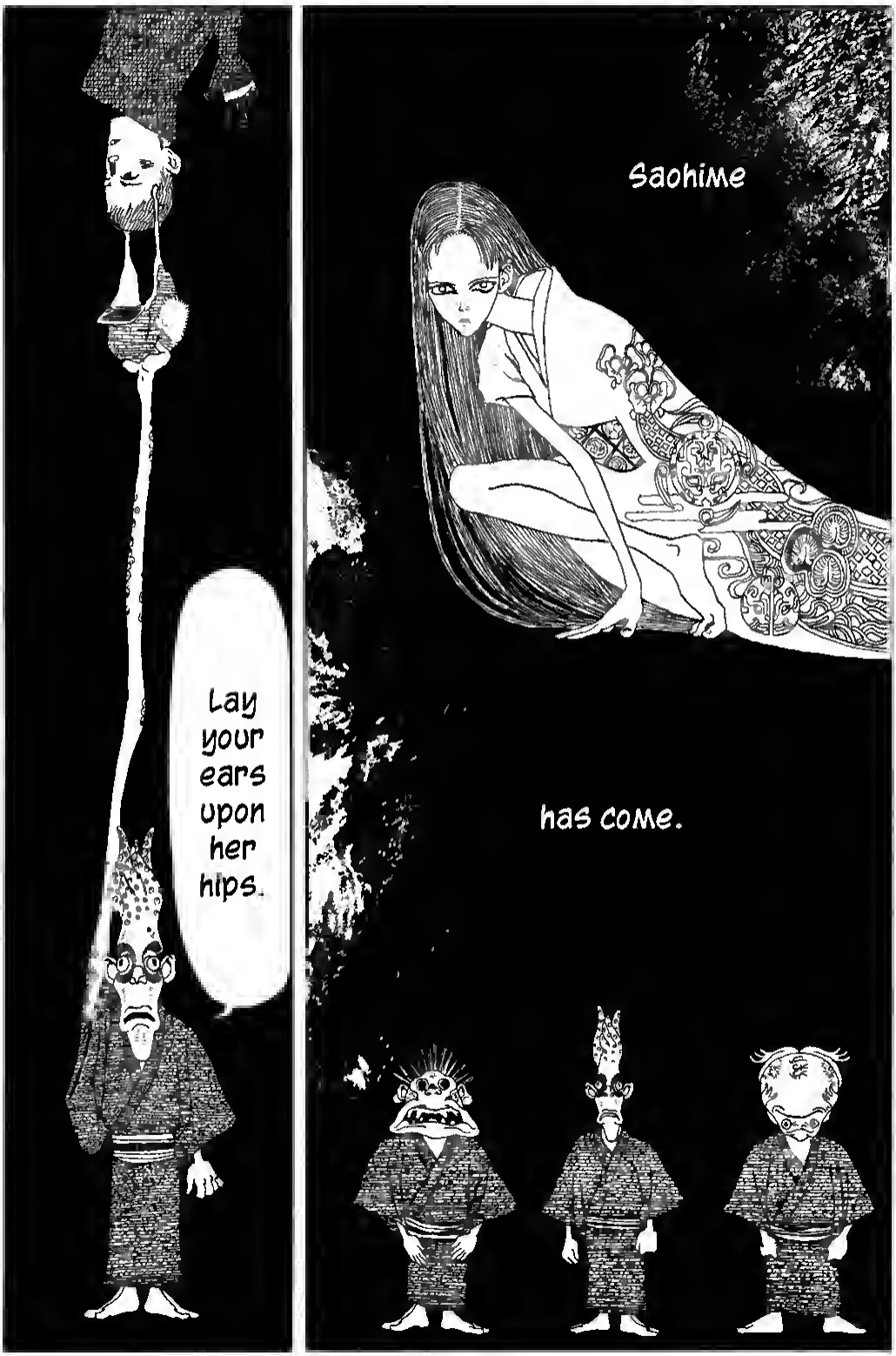

BEFORE HE KNEW IT, THE MAN HAD EVEN FORGOTTEN OF WALKING.
"Is it the ocean as it breaks onto shore,"
"or the wind as it blows across the prairies?"
No, it's not.
THOSE FAINT SOUNDS ATE AWAY AT THE MAN'S CONSCIOUS-NESS.

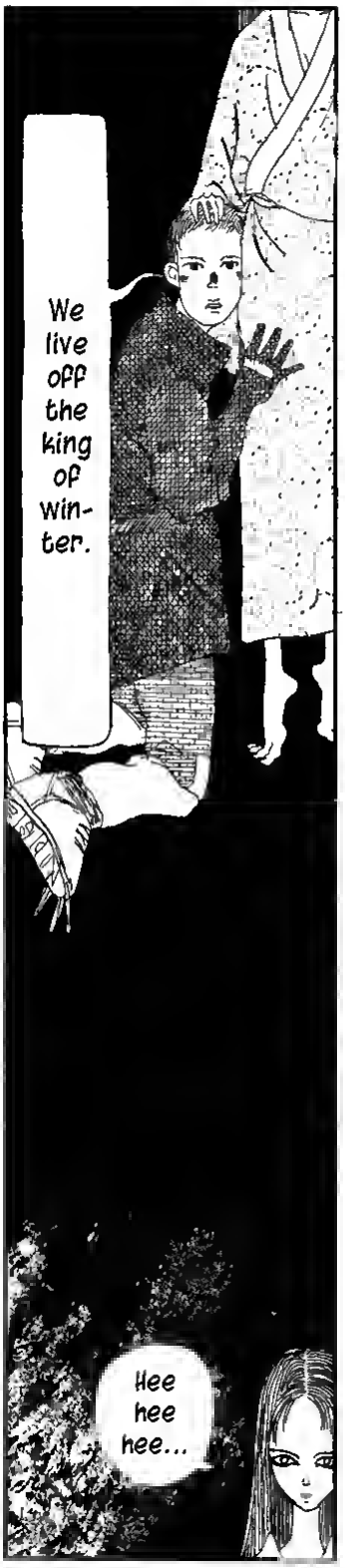
It's the sound of a breath freezing.
It's your own breath leaving your body.
The moment it was exhaled, your breath rang out and froze.

No, it's not.

"Is it the sound of bells, ringing in a pack...?"

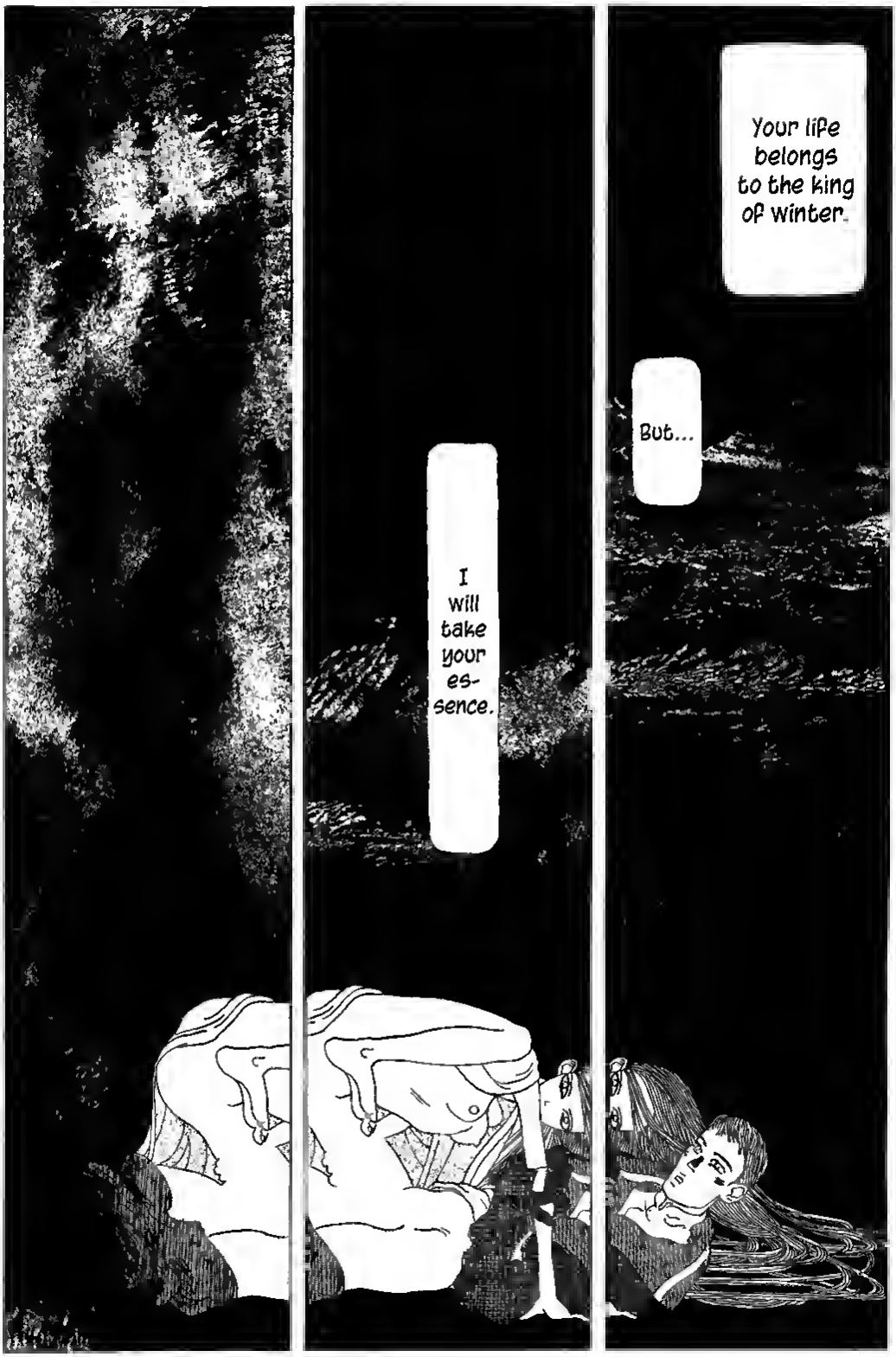

Look.
Look, it is Saohime.
However,
your essence will go to Saohime.
You've been swallowed by the winter king.
The winter king devours all life.


Saohime
has come.
Lay your ears upon her hips.


We live off the king of winter.
Hee hee hee...

We are Sao-hime.

You will hear
Sao-hime's voice.


Your life belongs to the king of winter.
But...
I will take your essence.

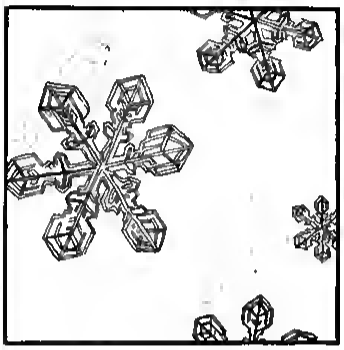
"I can hear a voice..."

Hee hee hee...

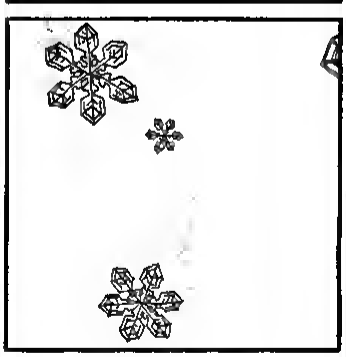
What is this?

Hee hee hee...

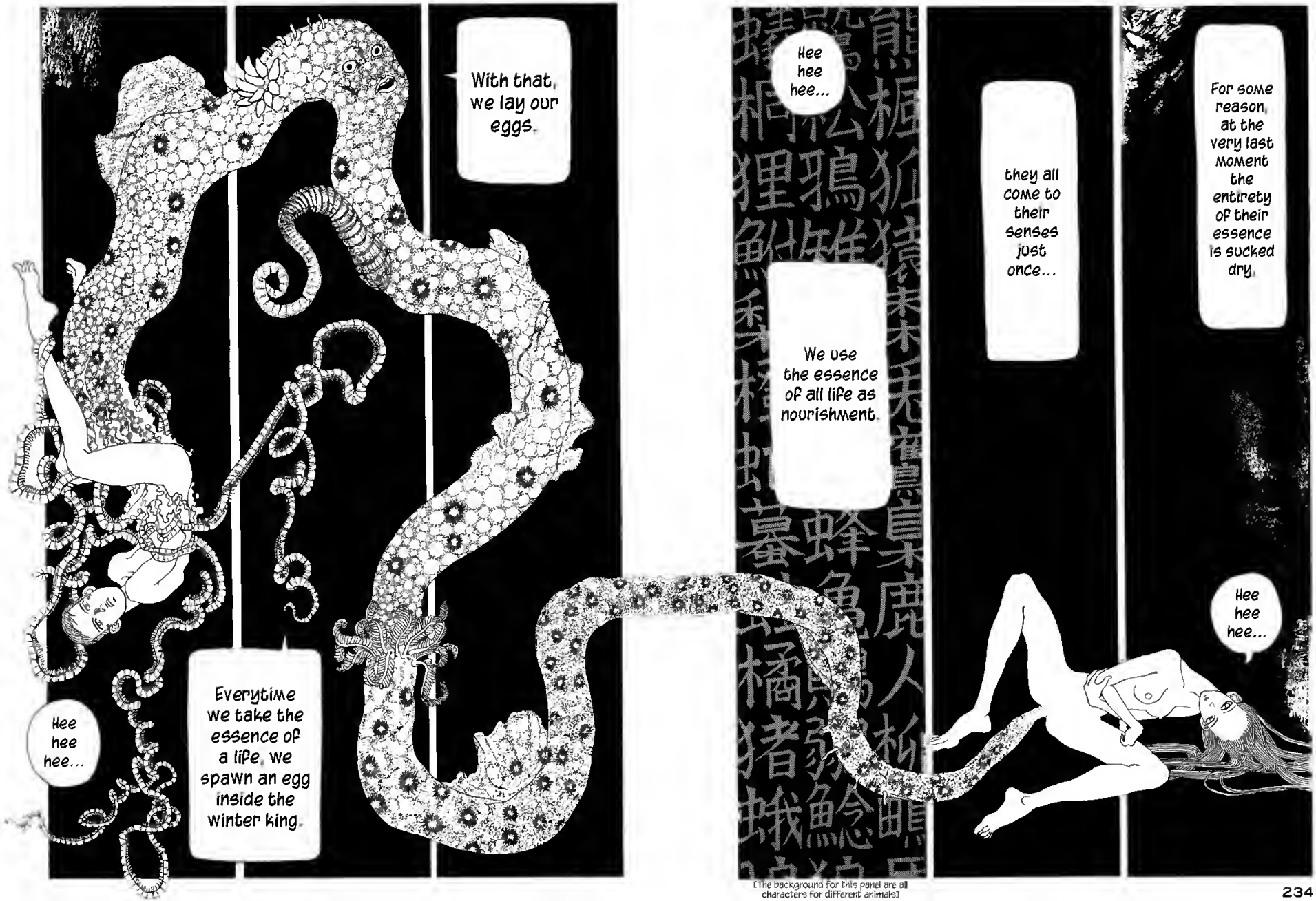
It seems like this human has noticed.



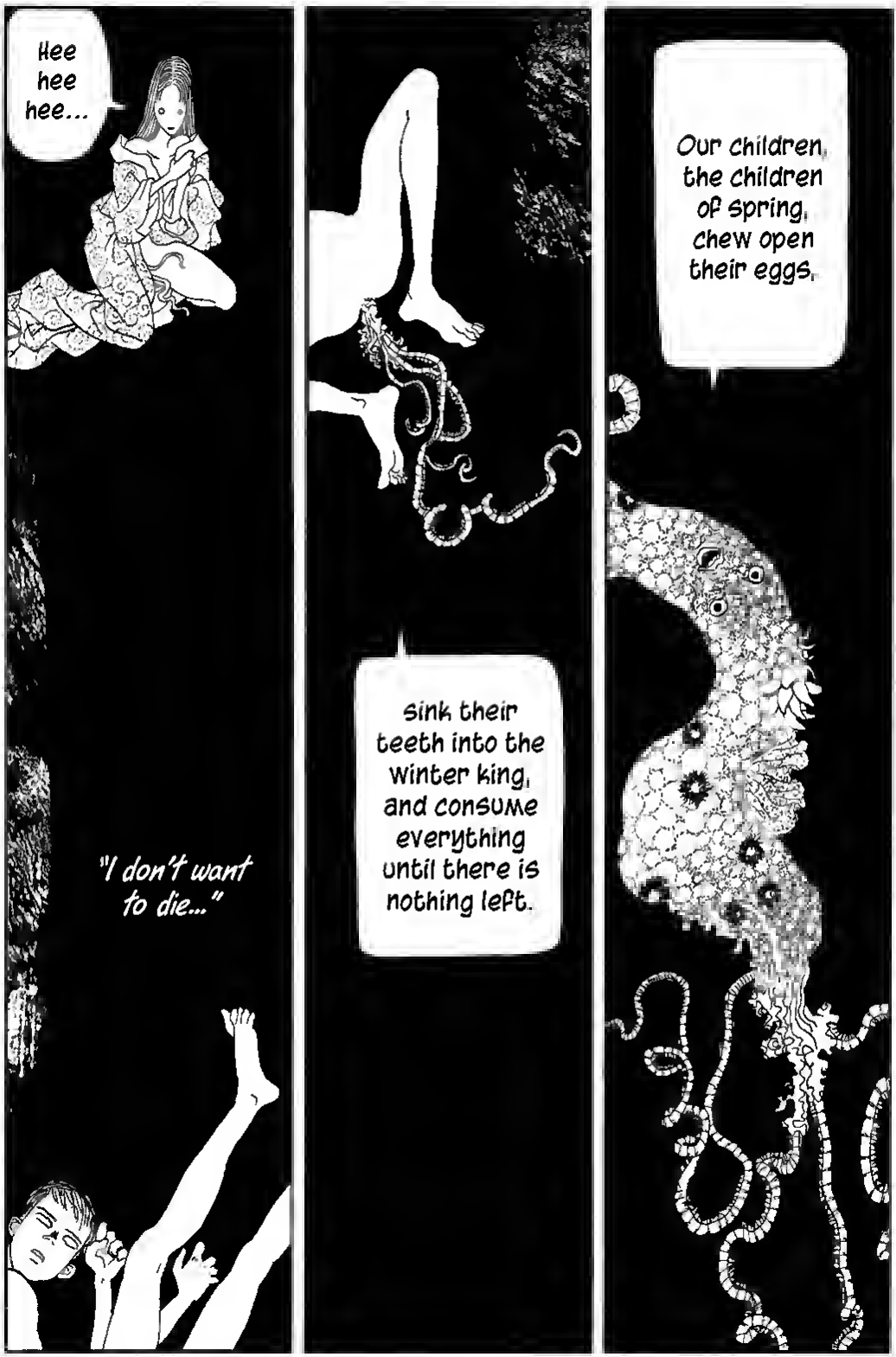
"...A voice..."

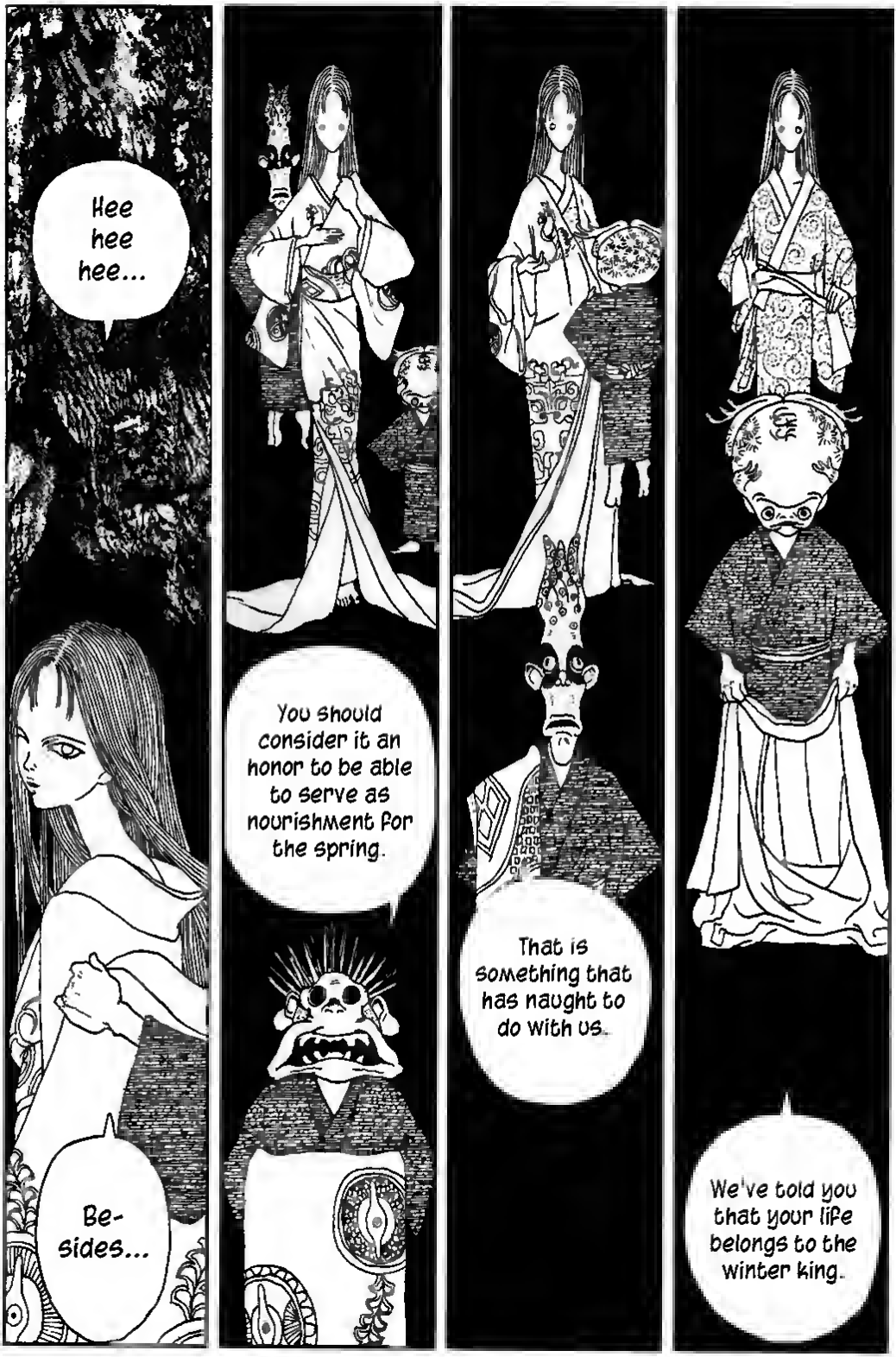


We survive off of the king of winter and absorb the essence of all life that shall become his...


With that, we lay our eggs.
Everytime we take the essence of a life, we spawn an egg inside the winter king.
Hee hee hee...
We use the essence of all life as nourishment.
Hee hee hee...
they all come to their senses just once...
For some reason, at the very last moment the entirety of their essence is sucked dry.
Hee hee hee...

[The background for this panel are all characters for different animals]


Hee hee hee...
"I don't want to die..."
sink their teeth into the winter king, and consume everything until there is nothing left.
Our children, the children of spring, chew open their eggs,


Hee hee hee...
Be-sides...
You should consider it an honor to be able to serve as nourishment for the spring.
That is something that has naught to do with us.
We've told you that your life belongs to the winter king.

[SAOHIME]

SHE IS THE GODDESS THAT RULES OVER SPRING, AS TATSUTAHIME IS THE GODDESS THAT RULES OVER SUMMER. SHE IS REGARDED AS THE GOD WHO CREATES THE HILLS AND FIELDS OF SPRING.

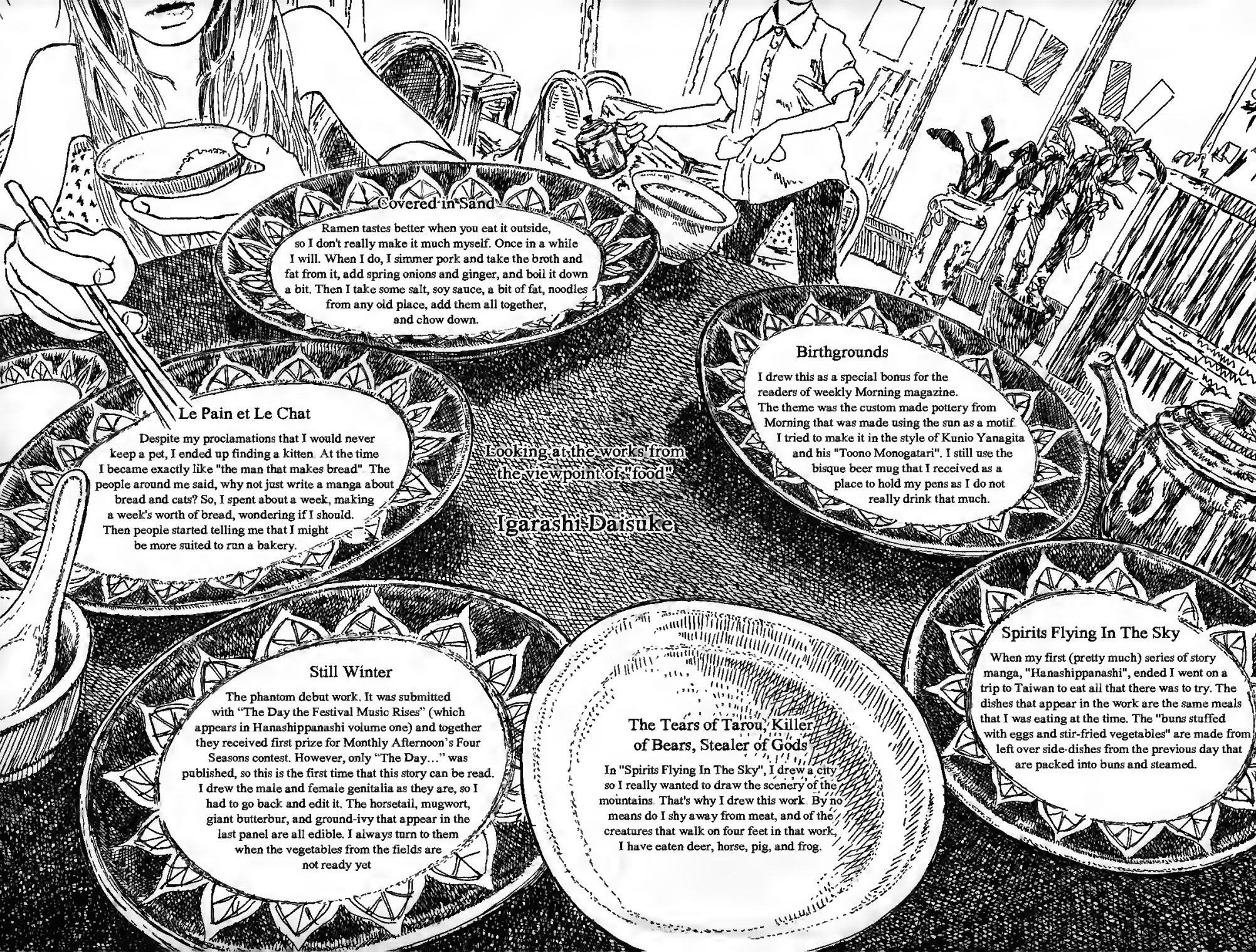
"You've been dead for ages already..."

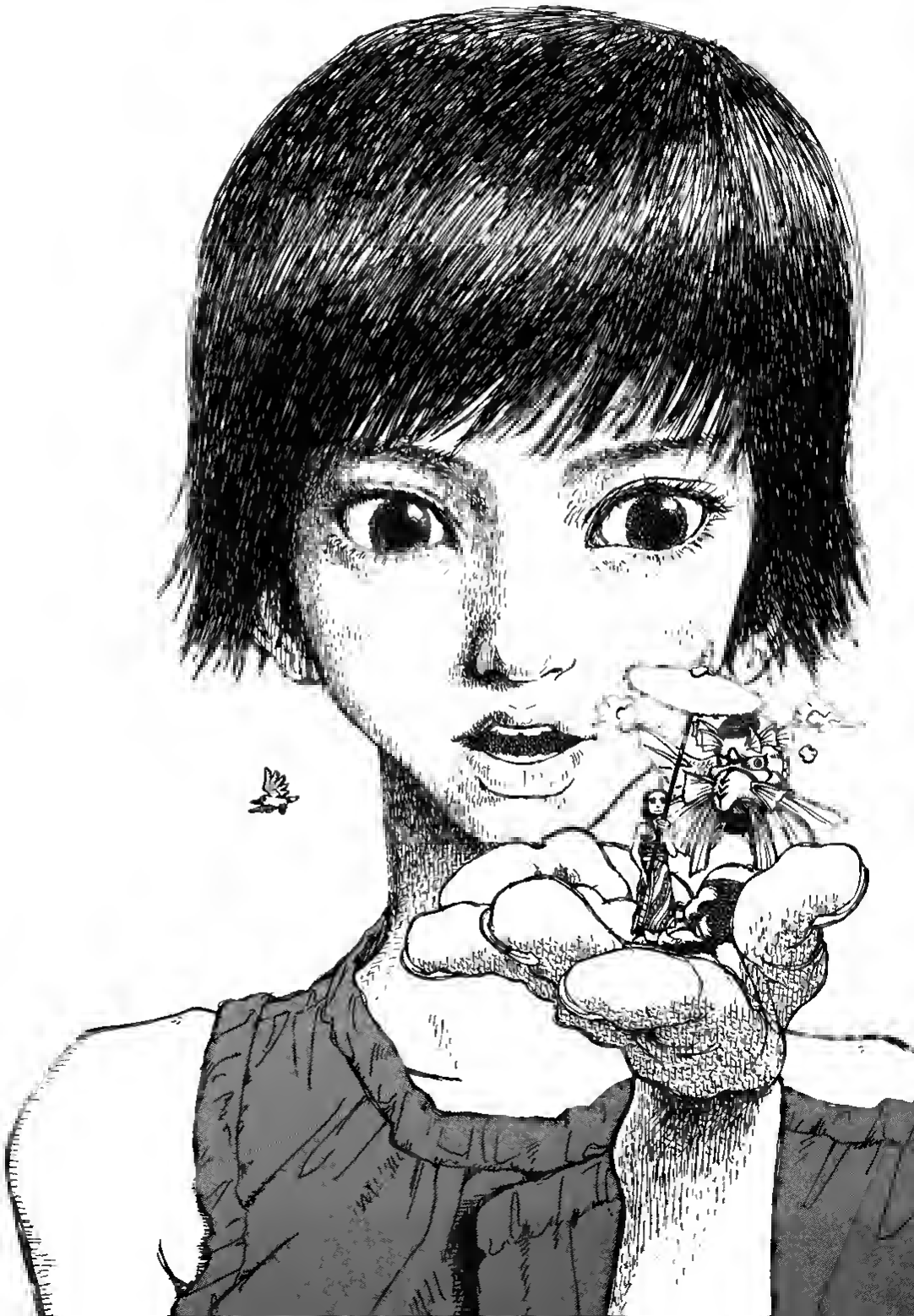
THAT IS THE STORY OF THE DREAM THAT THE MAN SLEEPING UNDER THE ICE HAD.

End

Still Winter

Afternoon Four Seasons award first prize winner for the winter contest of 1993 / Not yet published in a magazine.


Covered in Sand
Ramen tastes better when you eat it outside, so I don't really make it much myself. Once in a while I will. When I do, I simmer pork and take the broth and fat from it, add spring onions and ginger, and boil it down a bit. Then I take some salt, soy sauce, a bit of fat, noodles from any old place, add them all together, and chow down.
Birthgrounds
I drew this as a special bonus for the readers of weekly Morning magazine. The theme was the custom made pottery from Morning that was made using the sun as a motif. I tried to make it in the style of Kunio Yanagita and his "Toono Monogatari". I still use the bisque beer mug that I received as a place to hold my pens as I do not really drink that much.
Le Pain et Le Chat
Despite my proclamations that I would never keep a pet, I ended up finding a kitten. At the time I became exactly like "the man that makes bread". The people around me said, why not just write a manga about bread and cats? So, I spent about a week, making a week's worth of bread, wondering if I should. Then people started telling me that I might be more suited to run a bakery.
Looking at the works from the viewpoint of "food"
Igarashi Daisuke
Still Winter
The phantom debut work. It was submitted with "The Day the Festival Music Rises" (which appears in Hanashippanashi volume one) and together they received first prize for Monthly Afternoon's Four Seasons contest. However, only "The Day..." was published, so this is the first time that this story can be read. I drew the male and female genitalia as they are, so I had to go back and edit it. The horsetail, mugwort, giant butterbur, and ground-ivy that appear in the last panel are all edible. I always turn to them when the vegetables from the fields are not ready yet
The Tears of Tarou, Killer of Bears, Stealer of Gods
In "Spirits Flying In The Sky", I drew a city so I really wanted to draw the scenery of the mountains. That's why I drew this work. By no means do I shy away from meat, and of the creatures that walk on four feet in that work, I have eaten deer, horse, pig, and frog.
Spirits Flying In The Sky
When my first (pretty much) series of story manga, "Hanashippanashi", ended I went on a trip to Taiwan to eat all that there was to try. The dishes that appear in the work are the same meals that I was eating at the time. The "buns stuffed with eggs and stir-fried vegetables" are made from left over side-dishes from the previous day that are packed into buns and steamed.



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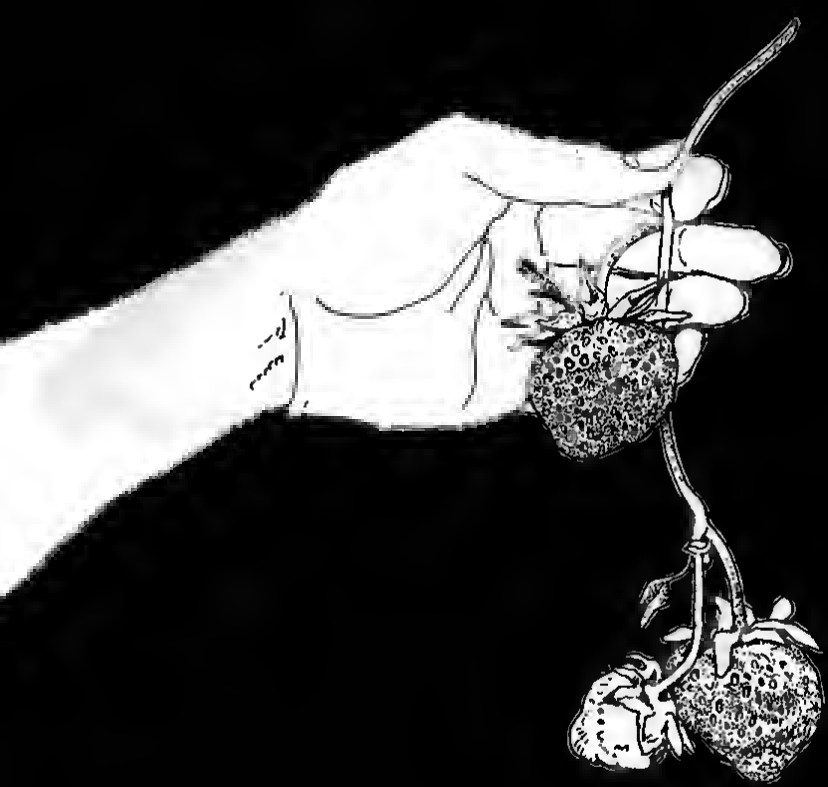

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